

THE LETTERS OF
ST. CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

Letters 67-82

ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WRITERS

THE WORKS OF THE FATHERS IN TRANSLATION

EDITED BY

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THE LETTERS OF
ST. CYPRIAN OF
CARTHAGE

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED

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*Conciliar letters, sent jointly by Cyprian and other African bishops

†Not written by Cyprian

INTRODUCTION

PREFATORY

Volume 3 left the emperors Valerian and Gallienus becoming confirmed in their joint principate (established from autumn 253 onwards), and Lucius, though confessor, was last seen in that volume (*Ep.* 61) still alive as bishop of Rome (he was to die in very early March 254). But when this volume opens, Lucius can be regarded as unequivocally enrolled among the martyred dead (*Ep.* 68.5.1) and Stephen, his successor, is already well installed in his bishopric (elected May 254); for such is the tone of Cyprian's letter to him on the Gallic affair (*Ep.* 68) as well as of the letter on the Spanish question (*Ep.* 67). When the volume closes (*Ep.* 81), Cyprian is vividly contemplating his progression from *confessor episcopus* to *martyr episcopus* by the enactment of that memorable scene on the *ager Sexti* behind the governor's quarters in mid-September 258, which was to win him his longed-for crown as the protoepiscopal martyr in Africa (Pont., *Vit. Cyp.* 19).

What follows here is the briefest of sketches of the imperial background over the years 254–58, during which the letters in this volume were being composed. A somewhat more detailed account is then rendered of the ecclesiastical upheavals and disputes over that same period, among which many of the letters (*Epp.* 67–75) are to be located. Finally, as the second and later group of letters (*Epp.* 76–81) are all associated with the persecution of Valerian, some context is provided for reading and appreciating those documents.

IMPERIAL EVENTS

When Valerian and his son Gallienus had succeeded in having their usurpation of power legitimized by the Roman Senate, they no doubt paused to cast a glance back over the preceding few years. Such a prospect could well have filled them with misgivings for the future, especially given the trick that history has of repeating itself. The last five years had witnessed altogether no fewer than ten legitimate *Augusti*: Philip the Elder and the Younger, Decius, Herennius Etruscus, Gallus, Hostilian, Volusian, Aemilian, and now Valerian and Gallienus. They had seen major military confrontations on the battlefield, in civil war (at Verona, at Interamna). There had been devastating foreign invasions into Roman territory: Goths under Kniva in the Danubian lands, with humiliating defeat of Roman arms, Persians under Sapor cutting a swathe right across Syria as far as Antioch, with humiliating collapse of Roman defences. And there had been other incursions elsewhere: the Rhine frontier, the Black Sea and Aegean areas, along with unrest in Egypt and Africa. Nor had pretenders and rebellion been lacking: among them Pacatian, Jopatian, Julius Priscus, Julius Valens, Uranius Antoninus. Not only that. Plague had been raging through the major cities of the empire since 250, having spread from Egypt. It did not augur well for the second Roman millennium.¹

Conciliation and consolidation were obviously claimant policies in the capital, with military repair and recovery in the provinces. The hearts of defeated or disaffected armies as well as of dissident and disappointed political rivals would need to be won. Precise chronology is vexed and controversial, but a likely reconstruction of events is that after a period together in the capital (Valerian and Gallienus were the opening consular pair for 254), Gallienus was soon off to military work on the more immediate northern frontiers, whereas Valerian delayed departure for the east for a somewhat longer period, attending to the routine business of politics and power (we chance to have no fewer than 82 rescripts datable to the six or seven years of Valerian's principate).² Pope Lucius may well have owed his recall from exile about this time to a general amnesty, not uncommonly an-

nounced to inaugurate a new regime with parade of clemency and conciliation.³

Usually the eastern question had proved to be at once more complex and less immediately pressing than the northern frontiers, though the potential stakes from prestige and military glory were high. But the severity of the Persian inroads and the completeness of the Roman collapse now made the question more urgent politically as well as militarily, and the general situation was becoming exacerbated by continuing barbarian raids across the Roman lines of supply and military communications (the invaders variously identified as [Pontic] Goths, Boradi, Borani, Scythians, etc.).⁴ Accordingly Valerian went off to conduct in person the eastern campaigns and negotiations.⁵ While the church leaders were zestfully embroiled in fierce and internecine dispute (still indirectly attributable to Decius' persecution—the status of Novatian's breakaway church, its baptism [*Epp.* 69–75], its penitential policies [*Ep.* 68], the conditions still properly to apply to bishops who had lapsed [*Ep.* 67]), Gallienus and Valerian had set about doing their conscientious best to keep enemies at bay on the frontiers and to draw the diverse elements of the empire together in concord at home. Church affairs were left alone to take their course, with episcopal elections openly held, and synods and more general councils freely convened.⁶

It is fatally easy to exaggerate the effects that the imperial events may have had on the immediate lives of the general population of the empire. At least in Rome and in Carthage—the focus of most of the action of *Epp.* 69 to 74—life will have been little disturbed by remoter frontier activities.⁷ Indeed, the defences of the African provinces will have been appreciably strengthened by the reconstitution and reinstatement of the protecting African legion, the Third Augusta (see introduction to *Ep.* 62). As for Spain (*Ep.* 67), while the impulse of a marauding band of Franks had carried it forward right across Gaul and over into the Peninsula, but little in the way of archeological evidence can be discovered to support (later) claims for wholesale occupation and destruction.⁸ At least Frankish disruption and depredations go entirely without resonance in *Ep.* 67. It is well to recall that at this season whole provinces could still positively thrive (as is the case with the villa culture of Roman Britain) or whole areas

could simply continue on their way without perceptible change or dislocation (so, for example, the Roman cities of Southern Anatolia).⁹ Cappadocia was, however, to suffer invasion and captive Christians would need to be ransomed soon after Firmilian wrote his long letter to Cyprian (*Ep.* 75),¹⁰ and Gaul (*Ep.* 68) was about the same time to become the centre of a breakaway western empire. But the view we glimpse of life in Gaul and Cappadocia in this correspondence is in advance of those events.

ECCLESIASTICAL EVENTS

By the autumn of 256 Pope Stephen could be depicted as having stirred up disputes and dissensions (*lites et dissensiones*) "throughout the churches of the entire world" (*Ep.* 75.24.2), and that in an episcopate that had so far lasted not quite two and a half years! However partial a judgment that might be, dispute and dissension undoubtedly characterize what we can perceive of the domestic life of the Church during these years.

In the far west there was discord within Spain (*Ep.* 67). Stephen had voiced approval for the reinstatement of two Spanish bishops who had lapsed during the persecution of Decius. This had succeeded in rousing the ire not only of the bishops who had been elected in their stead and of their loyal clergy and congregations, but also of a significant group of African bishops to whom they had appealed for support. Other, opposing bishops (*aliqui de collegis nostris*) were equally staunchly in favour of leniency (*Ep.* 67.9.1). Anger and division were rife (the delegation from Spain to Africa is tangible evidence of exasperation). Regrettably, we have represented only one side to the division and cannot hear the arguments that were adduced on the other side for extenuating the established regulations in these particular cases (laicization had been accepted as a standard condition for readmitting to communion a lapsed cleric).

The Gallic Church, too, was torn with discord. The provincial bishops had so far failed in their repeated attempts to oust their brother bishop in Arles, who defiantly persisted in maintaining a rigorist (Novatianic) policy towards the penitent lapsed. Cyprian, en-

listed in the fight by the Gallic bishops, did his indignant best to embroil Stephen as a protagonist in the contest (*Ep.* 68). Here again feelings were running high, to judge from the tenor of Cyprian's lengthy remonstrances.

In Rome itself disharmony and disunity were especially, and painfully, visible. Novatian, now excommunicated, had constituted himself as antipope and had succeeded in establishing a fully institutionalized schismatic church of the holy, a church of the saints. While Stephen may have been understandably anxious to ease the way for Novatianists to return to, or to join, the fold, polarization and confrontation were difficult to avoid when Novatianists themselves demanded that converts from orthodoxy should submit to (re)baptism (*Ep.* 73.2.1 ff., cf. Dionysius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.8 [Novatian "sets at naught the holy washing"]) and when such converts were regularly required to swear a solemn oath over the sacred Eucharist never to be reunited with their former church (so claims Cornelius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.18 f.). The Novatianists' righteous stance and zealous proselytizing hardly made the Church of Peter and Paul a scene of harmony and accord.

But within the actual boundaries of strict orthodoxy contention and strife hung in the air, like the plague that beset men's bodies. Rome even witnessed the ugly scene when an overseas ecclesiastical delegation (of bishops, no less) was ignominiously refused an audience by Stephen; and the pope further issued instructions to his brethren to deny the bishops even board and lodgings, the barest minimum of Christian hospitality, let alone the kiss of peace and communion (*Ep.* 75.25.1). They were envoys from Africa. But bishops in the east had fared no better.

The bishops of Asia Minor (from Pontus, Bithynia, Cilicia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Palestine, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia) had all been deeply divided over the claims of Novatian; peace and harmony had only just been restored among them when Stephen now caused strife to break out afresh over the baptismal issue, insisting that it was an unacceptable innovation to require converts from heresy to submit to (a second) baptism (see Dionysius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.46.3 f. [Novatian], 7.2 ff. [rebaptism]). The bishops at least of Galatia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, and neighbouring areas (prominent among them being Helenus of Tarsus and Firmilian of Caesarea in Cappadocia) upheld

the contrary view which their churches had confirmed earlier in conciliar decision (at a debate over the status of Montanist baptism, *Ep.* 75: 19-40). The result was the despatch of an angry letter from Stephen declaring he would no longer continue to be in communion with them (Dionysius *ad* Euseb. *HE* 7: 53 ff.). We do not know the stages by which this impasse had been arrived at, but *Ep.* 75 reveals with uncomfortable clarity the ill-will and ill-temper which had been generated in the process. The eastern churches were no exception to the general rule of disaccord.

In the southeast of the Mediterranean, in Egypt, Dionysius of Alexandria, usually noted for his conciliatory and measured temperament, was exercised domestically by an outbreak of Sabellian heresy in the Pentapolis (*ad* Euseb. *HE* 7: 6). But there was more disquiet than that. We can gauge something of his agitation over the inter-church strife on the baptismal issue when we have recorded for him on the subject, in quick succession, (i) a "very lengthy" letter of protestation to Stephen, (ii) a letter to Stephen's successor, Sixtus, (iii) a (brief) letter to Dionysius and Philemon, presbyters of Rome, (iv) a second (and lengthy) letter to Philemon, (v) a second letter to Dionysius while still presbyter of Rome, (vi) a second letter to Sixtus, (vii) a third document *On Baptism*, described as a "protracted demonstration" of the subject, addressed to Sixtus and the Church at Rome.

All this, at the outside, between 254 and 258. Here, too, prevailed anxiety for the Church's peace, and strenuous efforts to reach an acceptable solution to the issue.

But it is by means of the correspondence in this book (*Ep.* 69-75), along with the anonymous treatise *De rebaptismate* and the minutes of the Council of September 256,² that we are able to discern in detail for Africa the sorts of argument and the types of debate that were harrassing at the same time other areas of the Church.

In 251, when Cyprian first faced division within the Church and the establishment of an alien altar, he was moved to exclaim in a notable outburst:

It is these same men whom the Lord indicates and censures when He says: *They have forsaken me, the fountain of the water of life, and they have dug out for themselves cisterns, which cannot hold the water.* Whereas there can be but the one baptism, they think they can baptize; they have abandoned the fountain of life, yet

preserve the life and grace of the Church of all Africa. It looks clearly as if that men had been, but seeing their sins are not washed away but only added to. Their "new birth" has not being born with new flesh, but in the death. Hence if all they cannot believe what the Church has pronounced to be true by the Fatherhood, they are deprived of the grace of faith. The reward for those "in grace" can only come to men who have broken the peace of the Lord by the frenzy of dissent.

(*De unit.* 11, tr. Beyerle, ACW 25.53 f.)

Cyprian's feelings ran deep. Rupture of the peace of the Lord, the breaking of the Church's discipline (signifying for Cyprian both dogma and discipline, undifferentiated), put men outside the pale of salvation, the sources of grace. Baptism by the heretic had to be, therefore, utterly void. This was an attitude inherited from the own African tradition (cf. Tert. *De bapt.* 17.1 (C.C.L. 1.1.197)) and adopted by an earlier African Council, as provided even by a predecessor of his in the chair of Carthage, Agrippinus.¹⁰ From that basic position of 251 he was unprepared to shift despite all the barrage of subsequent objections. Neither was he prepared delicately to discriminate between heretics and schismatics. Dionysius of Alexandria seems to have been moving towards it. In Carthage he had had to face since 251 the affront of two rival bishops and their churches (*Ep.* 59.9 v. f.). Any differences between them here was latent; the other rigorous (Novatianic) paled into insignificance before the heinousness of their rupturing the bonds of charity; they had to be *outside*.

Others in Africa felt differently on the matter (a minority view could well have continued since the determination of the Council of Agrippinus, just as some individual African bishops had refused to receive penitent adulterers against the majority decision, *Ep.* 55.21 v. f.). In particular, should not Novatianists, baptizing with orthodox ceremony in the name of the orthodox Trinity (unlike, say, Gnostic heretics), be treated differently (*Ep.* 69)?

It took lengthy correspondence (e.g. *App.* 69, 73, 74), energetic pamphleteering (exemplified by *De rescriptis*), and no fewer than three Council meetings (with other gatherings implied e.g. in Novatian's *Ep.* 70) before Cyprian could finally demonstrate a solid presence of at least 26 other African bishops in unbroken fellowship (Clem. *epist.* 85). For Cyprian nothing less than the purity of the Church

was at issue and the sanctity of its ministers (holy ministers alone, in his view, were able to impart the Holy Spirit), as well as the theology of Holy Spirit (the concept of valid but incomplete baptism was to him incomprehensible; and he consistently refused to comprehend any difference between imposing hands for receiving the Holy Spirit and for remitting sin¹⁴). He had devoted his life and energies to the Church he loved; he could not now stand idly by and watch its inevitable pollution if contrary views prevailed. Africa, too, shared in the prevailing mood of "dispute and dissension."

Stephen, in trying to impose his own church's tradition on others, may well have been laudably anxious to facilitate reconciliation with the Novatianist schism (recognizing the validity of Novatianist baptism, and perhaps by corollary, even of Novatianist clerical orders¹⁵). If so, he had only managed instead to outrage Dionysius in Egypt (*ap. Euseb. H.E.* 7.5.3 ff.) and scandalously to estrange large numbers of African and eastern bishops.

Cyprian and Stephen had both fought passionately for what they believed to be the best interests of the Church, whether protecting it from the contagion of the unwashed or defending its hallowed traditions from innovation. It is sobering, therefore, to recall the last words we happen to hear between these two dedicated churchmen in this correspondence on the subject: they are from Stephen, roundly abusing Cyprian as being "a bogus Christ, a bogus apostle, and a crooked dealer" (*Ep.* 75.25.4).

PERSECUTION UNDER VALERIAN AND GALLIENUS

So far as we are able to judge, Valerian and Gallienus started off with a general attitude of *laissez-faire* towards Christians (as likely as not it was no delicately modulated policy, simply that other and more pressing matters of state commanded their attention).¹⁶ That did not mean, however, that Christians were assured of going unmolested. They were still individually liable to hostile attack. For example, a papyrus of February 28, 256 (P. Oxy. 3035) reveals orders to arrest from the Egyptian village of Mermertha one "Petosorapis, son of Horus, Christian"; that could mean that the man's Christianity provided

the grounds for his arrest. But in all events, in the course of the following year, 257, as the régime now approached the completion of its first quinquennium, that laissez-faire imperial attitude modified. The date is summer of that year; the orders conveyed to the proconsul in Africa by imperial *litterae* were implemented on August 30 in Carthage (*Act. procons. Cyp.* 1.1 Musurillo 168). While we are in ignorance of the precise and immediate circumstances which may have triggered off the despatch of these *litterae*,¹⁷ we do chance to have two precious documents which convey at a more general level the official reasoning that lay behind them.

(1) Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, in the course of defending his actions under persecution against defamation from a brother bishop named Germanus, has occasion to quote the *ipsissima verba* from the official court records of his trial before Aemilianus (the acting prefect of Egypt) in Alexandria. (There seems to have occurred already a court appearance followed by an adjournment while Dionysius and his clerical companions were left time to think things over.)

Aemilianus said: “. . . And verbally I discoursed with you concerning the clemency which our sovereigns have shown towards you. For they have given you the opportunity of going free should you be willing to turn to that which is according to nature and worship the gods who preserve their empire and forget those who are contrary to nature. What, therefore, do you say to these things? For I do not expect that you will be ungrateful for their clemency, since they urge you to turn to the better course.”

Dionysius replied: “Not all men worship all gods, but each group worships certain gods in whom they believe. It is so with us. We worship and adore the one God and Maker of all things, who has in fact entrusted the empire to the most revered emperors Valerian and Gallienus. It is to this God that we pray without ceasing for their empire, that it may continue unshaken.”

Aemilianus, the acting prefect, said to them: “And who is stopping you from worshipping this one also (if indeed he is a god) along with the gods according to nature? For you were bidden to adore gods, and gods whom all know.”

Dionysius replied: “We worship no other.”

Aemilianus, the acting prefect, said to them: “I observe you are at once ungrateful and insensible of the leniency of our emperors. Therefore you shall not be in this city but you shall be despatched to the parts of Libya and stay in a place called Cephro. This is the place I have chosen, following the orders of our em-

perors. And it will be absolutely forbidden to you or to any others to hold meetings or to enter the so-called 'cemeteries' [— sleeping places]. And if anyone should be shown not to have reached the place that I have commanded or should be discovered at any assembly, he is going to bring peril upon himself, for the severity that these matters call for will not be lacking. Be off, therefore, to the place to which you have been commanded" (*ap. Fuseb. H.F.* 7.11.6 ff.).

The official concerns, we can observe, are for worship to be given to known gods (not "unnatural" ones) who preserve the empire and for public conformity to be displayed as part of the process of winning that preservation of the state (the "unnatural" religious assemblies of Christians are, as a corollary, to be forbidden). Dionysius' attempt to sidestep the imperial demands is telling: Christians already pray for the continued security of the empire without ceasing, and to the one God that matters. Maintaining *pax* with the divine was understood by both sides to be the underlying objective.

(2) The court records (dated August 30, 257) are also preserved for Cyprian's appearance before the proconsul in Carthage.¹⁸

The proconsul Paternus said to Cyprian the bishop: "The most revered emperors Valerian and Gallienus have honoured me with a letter in which they command that those who do not worship Roman religion must acknowledge Roman rites. Accordingly I have made inquiries in your connection. What is the answer you make to me?"

Cyprian the bishop said: "I am a Christian and a bishop. I know no other gods beside the one, true God who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them. This is the God we Christians serve, to this God we pray day and night for you and for all mankind, and for the well-being of the emperors themselves."

The proconsul Paternus said: "And so you persist in this way of thinking?"

Cyprian the bishop answered: "A good way of thinking which brings knowledge of God cannot be changed."

The proconsul Paternus said: "You will be able, then, to go into exile to the city of Curubis, in accordance with the orders of Valerian and Gallienus."

Cyprian the bishop said: "I go."

The proconsul Paternus said: "They have honoured me by

writing not only about bishops but also about presbyters. I want you to tell me, therefore, who are the presbyters dwelling in this city?"

Cyprian the bishop answered: "By an excellent and beneficial determination you have outlawed informers. Hence I am unable to reveal or denounce them; but they are to be found in their own cities. Our rules forbid anyone to surrender himself voluntarily and you strongly disapprove of this as well, they may not, therefore, surrender themselves but they will be discovered if you search for them."

The proconsul Paternus said: "I shall certainly make a search for them today from this community."

Cyprian the bishop said: "If you make inquiries they will be discovered."

The proconsul Paternus said: "I shall discover them." And he added: "They also command that they should not hold meetings in any place or enter the cemeteries. If, therefore, anyone does not observe this salutary command, he will suffer capital punishment" (*Act. procons. Cyp.* I Musurillo 168 ff.).

We are able to discern the same stress on public conformity in acceptable ritual action (*Romanae caeremoniae recognoscere*), and Cyprian's defensive insistence that Christians pray without ceasing for the well-being of the emperors' persons (*pro incolumitate imperatorum ipsorum*) indicates what he, too, perceived to be the imperial motivation behind that stress on ritual conformity. Higher clerical orders only—involved in performing the "unnatural" Christian *caeremoniae*—are concerned, viz. bishops, presbyters (deacons, as well—Dionysius' companions included three deacons), and Christians' ritual assemblies themselves and their sacred grounds are proscribed.

We do not chance to have a great deal of evidence for the actual implementation of these orders, save for Africa Proconsularis (the case of Cyprian), Egypt (the case of Dionysius and his five companions), and Numidia (the two exiled bishops in *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 3 Musurillo 196). Much will have depended on the initiative and zeal of the individual governor, the eminence of local clerics (too much in the public eye to allow them to be overlooked), and, of course, popular hostility against Christians in a particular area which could lead to the reporting of Christian lawbreaking or of the whereabouts of Christian clergy. Governors, however indifferently they felt towards religious matters or however anxious they were to avoid needless trouble, could not let themselves be seen too blatantly to disregard entirely the emperors'

wishes: they had careers to foster. At least in one sector of Numidia the grinding hardships and ordeals that were to confront Christian clergy and laity alike were painfully real (*Epp.* 76 ff.); they had to face the capital penalties threatened to those who infringed the ordinances. And the version we have of Gallienus' later rescript of toleration certainly implies that Christian places of worship (*temples*) might be subject to sequestration (and Christian cemetery grounds might be seized, as we gather from the further imperial ordinance which Eusebius paraphrases in *H.E.* 7.13 *ad fin.*). The *litterae* of 257 did not merely convey a clear licence from the emperors, if a governor chanced to be so inclined, to outlaw Christian officials and corporate Christian worship; more positive action was being demanded.

But the last decade had given Christians practice in the skills required for evading detection, and the elaborate international network of the brotherhood (witness *Epp.* 80) further assisted underground survival. Even those actually apprehended for exemplary treatment and exiled continued their proselytizing activities (so Dionysius at Cephro, *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.11.12 f.); they even participated in the (forbidden) assemblies (so Dionysius claims at Colluthion, *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.11.17); they were flocked with Christian visitors, laden with their gifts (Cyprian at Curubis enjoyed *frequentium visitantium fructum et operum inde oritur caritatem*, Pont., *Vit. Cyp.* 12 H. C10); they might continue lavishly to minister to the Christian poor (see Pont., *Vit. Cyp.* 13 H. CV) or send sustaining support to fellow confessors (see *Epp.* 76–79).

The Roman Senate appears to have written to Valerian in the east requesting official guidance for dealing with such public defiance of the imperial wishes (as far as we know, the clergy of Rome had all so far managed to survive unharmed). Valerian replied (*rescriptum Valerianum ad senatum*, *Epp.* 80.1.2) with summary orders to execute bishops, presbyters, and deacons and to degrade, as well as confiscate the property of, socially prominent Christians (senators, equestrians, matrons) and Christian members of the imperial household (*Caesariani*). Copies of the orders were being sent simultaneously to the provinces. They reached Rome by August 258. The bloodiest persecution of Christians before the fourth century had started.

An ingredient in Valerian's decision may have been reaction to the affront cast upon the imperial dignity and Roman law by open

Christian recalcitrance. But an administrator, however hotly outraged, however hastily he may have been obliged to act while in the midst of military campaigning, would still have realized the grave consequences of these orders to be distributed throughout the empire. This was persecution, because it was thought it mattered that Christian religious leaders should be extirpated and that Christians in positions of prominence should not be allowed to be seen publicly to repudiate "Roman ceremonies" with impunity. The proconsul in Africa, putting into effect the new ordinances on September 14, 258 in Carthage, provides our most immediate gloss: he could well echo some of the phrases in the preamble of the imperial rescript itself.

Galerius Maximus conferred with his judicial council and then with difficulty and reluctance declared: "You have long lived with sacrilegious views and you have gathered to yourself many vicious men in a conspiracy. You have set yourself up as an enemy to the Roman gods and to their sacred rites. And the pious and most revered emperors Valerian and Gallienus, Augusti, and Valerian, the most noble Caesar, have been unable to bring you back to the observance of their own sacred rituals.

"Therefore, having been apprehended as the instigator and ringleader in atrocious crime, you are going to be made an example to those whom you have gathered together through your criminal actions. The authority of the law shall be ratified by means of your blood."

He then read out the verdict from a tablet: "It is the sentence that Thascius Cyprianus be executed by the sword."

Cyprian the bishop said: "Thanks be to God."

(*Act. procon. Cyp.* 4 Musurillo 172)"

Cyprian had spent a whole year in anxious expectation of this moment. His inspired words, uttered a year before on the tribunal as confessor, had been promptly transcribed, treasured, and given wide circulation and lavish laudation (witness *Ep.* 77.2, written from mines in Numidia; and cf. *Pont., Vit. Cyp.* 11 H. CI). A vision of his as confessor had been relayed in detail and interpreted as prophetic of this very day (so *Pont., Vit. Cyp.* 12 f. H. CIII ff.). In recent weeks he had spent long days with his assembled clergy meditating with them on this very moment of his *agon* (*Ep.* 80.1.1), and then, in confident expectation of the end, he had rallied the brethren with a series of rousing exhortations (*Pont., Vit. Cyp.* 14 *ad fin.* H. CVI). He had

also contrived, by eluding the proconsul's agents, that he should be seen to go forward to take his seat on the celestial tribunal (as he would have put it) in the midst of his own Carthaginian Church (*Ep.* 81.1 f.): for the Church was in the bishop (*Ep.* 66.8.3) and the witnessing people would thus become partners in the graces, and the *gloria*, of their own inspirited bishop.

The entire Carthaginian congregation (*universus populus fratrum*), so prepared and exhorted, thronged to witness the noble spectacle; they all kept vigil outside his quarters throughout the night, then accompanied him to the place of execution. There Cyprian enacted an *exemplum* of conscious dignity, at last putting into deed the words he had so often preached. The brethren spread out cloths and handkerchiefs to catch the drops of his precious blood: the *cultus* of saint Cyprian, bishop and martyr, had begun.²⁰

So Cyprian suffered and his body was laid out nearby to satisfy the curiosity of the pagans. But at nightfall his body was moved from there and, accompanied by tapers and torches, it was conducted with prayers in great triumph to the burial ground of Macrobius Candidianus the procurator, which lies on the Mappalian Way near the fishponds. And there it was buried (*Act. procons. Cyp.* 5.6 Musurillo 174).

Within twelve months fellow martyrs could be numbered throughout the empire, securely attested all the way from the west (Bishop Fructuosus and his two deacons in Spain) through the central Mediterranean (the bishop of Rome, one of his presbyters, and all of his seven deacons, as well as a Roman reader and a doorkeeper), as far as the east (Priscus, Malchus, and Alexander in Palestine, *Euseb. H.E.* 7.12),²¹ while in the south the African provinces are especially rich in testimony of fellow martyrs (e.g. *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* for Numidia, *Act. Montan. et Luc.* for Africa Proconsularis). But Cyprian was to become the most celebrated of them all.²²

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LETTERS

The relative dating of each letter is discussed under the rubric "Date and Circumstances" in the commentary on the individual let-

ters. I merely summarize here the conclusions reached there, so that the reader can be alerted to follow the correspondence through its chronological sequence.

(1) The somewhat lacunose *Ep.* 82 is out of series, having first been published as late as 1944. If it is genuinely Cyprianic (and there is room for hesitation), it would appear more to be associated with the persecution of Decius and its immediate aftermath (Cyprian is relieved to hear that the virgin confessors to whom he writes have all survived safe in faith and body) than it is likely to be connected with any later period in the 250s. It ought accordingly to be read first.

(2) Then most probably comes the start of the baptismal letters, *Epp.* 69 and 70. While one must leave room for dispute on the correct sequence (there are too many unknowns), the most reasonable ordering of the letters on the baptismal question is first *Ep.* 69, which is the only one in the series not to mention other letters in the group, neither does it appeal, unlike the rest, to conciliar actions on the question. Its own dating, however, remains fluid, save that Cornelius is dead (§3.2); it must, therefore, postdate mid-253. The best guess for it is circa 253/254. Second comes *Ep.* 70, the first conciliar document on the matter, addressed to 18 Numidian bishops: it emanates most probably from a spring Council meeting in 255 (though a full year earlier, 254, is also feasible).

(3) Next there are the pair of letters, *Epp.* 67 and 68, connected neither with the baptismal dispute nor with the persecution of Valerian (these two events account for all the remaining letters). Both are somewhat prickly documents. In the case of *Ep.* 68, Cyprian is hectoring Stephen publicly to repudiate a Novatianizing bishop in Gaul, while in *Ep.* 67 the 37 African bishops bluntly but indirectly attack Stephen's actions in voicing approval for the reinstatement of a lapsed Spanish bishop. *Ep.* 67 in fact ends up roundly damning those who join in unlawful communion with such polluted sinners to continued partnership with them also in the deadly punishments they are rightly to suffer (§9.2); it strikes a discernibly more acerbic tone towards Stephen than *Ep.* 68 and could well be the later document. But both on internal evidence still imply that Stephen will have already been some time in his episcopal office. Read, therefore, *Ep.* 68 and then *Ep.* 67, datable to around 255/256.

(4) The baptismal question then takes centre stage. A copy of

the last letter on the issue, *Ep.* 70 (?spring 255), is now enclosed with *Ep.* 71, while a copy of *Ep.* 71 is in turn enclosed with *Ep.* 72 (?spring 256). *Ep.* 71 is to be located, therefore, somewhere in the year (or perhaps two) separating *Ep.* 70 and *Ep.* 72. That is to say, its probable dates are 255/256. The setting of *Ep.* 72 (a conciliar letter to Stephen) appears to be the Council of 71 bishops that is mentioned in *Ep.* 73.1.2. For the date of that meeting the most economical hypothesis is May/June of 256. By now the dispute has raised questions about the pedigree of rival traditions, and truth is being declared to override (erroneous) custom; the tone is becoming more urgent, but it is nevertheless still carefully modulated. And the focus is perceptibly widening—with *Ep.* 72 Rome comes openly into the arena as well as the African provinces.

Thereafter a flurry of lengthy letters. *Ep.* 73 to Iubaianus, written soon after *Ep.* 72; *Ep.* 74 to Pompeius, written not too long after *Ep.* 73, but when Stephen has by now had time to reply to *Ep.* 72 (*Ep.* 74.1.1), and all this in time for copies of these two letters to be sent on, with a (lost) covering letter, to Firmilian in Cappadocia: he has their contents before him when he writes in reply *Ep.* 75 in the late autumn of 256. The great muster of bishops for September 1, 256 will have been gathering in Carthage as Cyprian's clerical letter carrier was making his lengthy journey from Carthage over to Caesarea in Cappadocia. The dispute has now grown scandalously intemperate and Stephen has notoriously "ruptured the peace" not only with southern colleagues in Africa but with a large bloc of eastern bishops as well.

Read in their numerical sequence, accordingly, *Ep.* 71 right through to *Ep.* 75.

(5) We have to move on at the very least a full 12 months before our next letter, *Ep.* 76. By that time Cyprian has faced his initial trial in the persecution of Valerian (August 30, 257), he is in exile (at Curubis), and Numidian Christians (clergy and laity) are suffering, and already dying, in the mine to which they have been condemned. There are three separate replies, *Epp.* 77, 78, 79. The dates for *Epp.* 76–79 could well fall somewhere within the first six months or so of 258.

By the time of our next document, *Ep.* 80, Cyprian has been summoned back to Carthage and is under house arrest in his *borti*; it

is about mid-August 258 and Cyprian is passing on word that the persecution is now entering on a new, perilous, and decidedly more virulent stage. Very soon afterwards an official attempt was made to take Cyprian to Utica for trial. Cyprian writes *Ep.* 81 to explain to his Carthaginian congregation that he has withdrawn for the moment, so that he will not deny his people the glory of his going forth to his martyrdom in their midst. On the morning of September 14, 258 he is to be dead on the *ager Sexti* in the outskirts of Carthage, so witnessed by his people, only a week or two after writing *Ep.* 81.

In summary, therefore, read in order *Ep.* 82; *Epp.* 69, 70; *Epp.* 68, 67; *Epp.* 71 to 75; *Epp.* 76 to 81.

TEXT

I translate as best I can what still remains the standard text, by G. Hartel, *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum* 3, part 2, 1871 (there is a Johnson reprint, New York and London 1965). Dr. G. F. Diercks, who is preparing a new text of the Cyprianic correspondence for the series *Corpus christianorum*, has kindly kept me informed of the fruits of his industrious collation of the manuscripts. His generous communications have left me more aware than ever that when his much-awaited edition is published, this translation and commentary will require revision in a number of particulars. For the moment, however, I have had to try to remain content with Hartel for lack of a better, but where mistrust of his text is overwhelming and it involves matters of some substance, I say so.

* * *

Cyprian has occupied a decade and a half of my research life. I close with a word of thanks for the generous and helpful criticism I have received from scholars over that period, especially from Fr. M. Bévenot, S.J., Dr. S. L. Greenslade (both now deceased), and from Dr. G. F. Diercks—but there are very many others. I am grateful to institutions and their librarians where I have worked, the Institute for Classical Studies (London), the Institute for Advanced Study

(Princeton), Churchill College and the University Library (Cambridge), the Universities of Monash and Melbourne, and the Australian National University (Humanities Research Centre). I am appreciative of the assistance I have had from many typists and research assistants over all these years in the tedious task of converting several thousand pages of manuscript through typescript versions to the printed books. But before all others I must thank my wife and family for providing a life of noisy good sense and healthy good cheer which has helped to keep such an obsessive occupation in proportion. We all gravely miss Peter, who died, aged 14, on August 17, 1979. It is to his memory that these books are fondly dedicated.

Canberra, 1983

THE LETTERS OF
ST. CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

Letters 67–82

LETTER 67

Cyprian, Caecilius, Primus, Polycarp, Nicomedes, Lucilianus, Successus, Sedatus, Fortunatus, Ianuarius, Secundinus, Pomponius, Honoratus, Victor, Aurelius, Sattius, Petrus, another Ianuarius, Saturninus, another Aurelius, Venantius, Quietus, Rogatianus, Tenax, Felix, Faustus, Quintus, another Saturninus, Lucius, Vincentius, Libosus, Geminus, Marcellus, Iambus, Adelphius, Victoricus, and Paulus¹ send greetings to their brothers in the Lord, Felix the presbyter and the laity dwelling at Legio and at Asturica, as also to Aelius the deacon and the laity dwelling at Emerita.²

1.1 When we had assembled together, dearly beloved brothers, we read your letters which you sent to us by the hands of our fellow bishops Felix and Sabinus.³ Acting out of the soundness of your faith and your fear of the Lord, you made known to us that Basilides and Martialis, being defiled by idolatrous certificates and enslaved in conscience by their abominable crimes, were fit neither to govern their bishoprics nor to perform their sacred offices as priests of God.⁴ And, moreover, you expressed your desire that a reply should be sent back to you on this matter so that by stating our opinion we should bring some alleviation to your just and very proper scruples, whether it be in the form of comfort or of help.⁵

1.2 But, in fact, this desire of yours is answered not so much by counsels from us as by precepts from on high; for the voice of heaven and the law of God long ago determined and prescribed what manner of men are fit to do service at the altar and to celebrate the divine sacrifices. For in the book of Exodus God addresses Moses with these words of warning: *Let the priests who approach the Lord God keep themselves holy lest perchance the Lord should forsake them.* And again: *And they who approach to minister at the altar of the Holy One shall not bring sin upon themselves lest they should die.* And likewise in Leviticus the Lord com-

mands with these words: *The man in whom there has been any defilement or blemish shall not approach to offer gifts to God.*⁶

2.1 This having been declared and revealed to us so long ago, we have no choice but to give unquestioning obedience to these commandments of God. It is not possible in matters of this kind to admit of exceptions nor is it in the power of any man indulgently to bestow concessions in a case where God interposes, where He prescribes and lays down the law for us. Neither should we forget the wrathful rebuke which the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, directed against the Jews because they had despised the precepts of God and were following instead the doctrines of men. *These people*, He said, *honour me with their lips but their hearts are far removed from me. But in vain do they worship me, for they teach the commandments and doctrines of men.* The Lord, likewise, repeats this same sentiment in the Gospel with these words: *You reject the commandment of God so that you can establish a tradition of your own.*⁷

2.2 We must keep these words before our eyes and ponder on them prayerfully and anxiously when a bishop is to be appointed; we must select as our priests only those who are sound and without blemish, men who can offer sacrifice to God in a holy and worthy manner and who can therefore be heard in the prayers they make for the well-being of the Lord's own people. For it is written: *God hears not the sinner, but if any man is a worshipper of God and does His will He hears him.*⁸ Therefore we are to choose for the priesthood of God only after painstaking application and scrupulous inquiry those whose prayers we are certain may be heard by God.

3.1 And the faithful are not to beguile themselves with the notion that, while they are in communion with a bishop who is a sinner and acquiesce in their church leader's wrongful and unlawful exercise of episcopal powers, they can remain themselves untouched by the infection of his offence. For God in His strict justice issues us with His warning through the prophet Hosea in these words: *Their sacrifices are like the bread of mourning; all who eat of them shall be defiled.* Thereby He is plainly revealing to us the lesson that without exception all are held in bondage to sin who have been defiled by the sacrifices of a bishop who is ungodly and unlawful.

3.2 And we find this same lesson also demonstrated in the Book of Numbers when Core, Dathan, and Abiron claimed for themselves

the power to offer sacrifice in opposition to Aaron the priest; in that case, also, the Lord commanded through Moses that the people should be separated from them, for fear that from their association with those wicked men they should themselves become contaminated with that same wickedness. *Separate yourselves, He said, from the tents of those hardened and evil sinners, and touch nothing of the things that are theirs lest you perish along with them in their sin.*⁹ And that is why the faithful who are obedient to the Lord's commandments and stand in fear of God must separate themselves off from their bishop if he is a sinner; they must have no part in the sacrifices of a priest who is sacrilegious, especially as they have in their own hands the power both to select bishops who are worthy and to reject those who are unworthy.¹⁰

4.1 Moreover, we can see that divine authority is also the source for the practice whereby bishops are chosen in the presence of the laity and before the eyes of all, and they are judged as being suitable and worthy after public scrutiny and testimony. For just so the Lord bids Moses in the Book of Numbers with the words: *Take your brother Aaron and Eleazar his son, and place them on the mountain in the presence of all the assembled people. Strip Aaron of his robe and put it upon Eleazar his son, and there let Aaron die and be laid to rest.*¹¹

4.2 Here God directs that His priest is to be invested before all of the assembled people; that is to say, He is instructing and demonstrating to us that priestly appointments are not to be made without the cognizance and attendance of the people, so that in the presence of the laity the iniquities of the wicked can be revealed and the merits of the good proclaimed, and thus an appointment may become right and lawful if it has been examined, judged, and voted upon by all. This rule we find subsequently observed in the Acts of the Apostles following these divine instructions. When Peter addresses the people on the subject of appointing a bishop to replace Judas, we read: *Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, for a large number was gathered together.*¹²

4.3 And we notice that the apostles observed this rule not in the appointment of priests and bishops only, but even in the case of deacons as well, just as we find it recorded in their Acts: *And the Twelve called together the whole congregation of the disciples and spoke to them.*¹³

4.4 Now the whole congregation was called together and great

caution and scrupulousness was here being exercised just so as to avoid that anyone unworthy might sidle his way into the service of the altar or the dignity of bishop. That unworthy men are sometimes appointed to clerical office not following the will of God but through the presumption of men, and that what does not issue from a rightful and lawful appointment finds no favour with God, God makes manifest Himself through the prophet Hosea with these words: *They have set up a king for themselves but not by my leave.*¹⁴

5.1 Hence we should show sedulous care in preserving a practice which is based on divine teaching and apostolic observance, a practice which is indeed faithfully followed among us and in practically every province. And it is this: when an episcopal appointment is to be duly solemnized, all the neighbouring bishops in the same province convene for the purpose along with the people for whom the leader is to be appointed; the bishop is then selected in the presence of those people, for they are the ones who are acquainted most intimately with the way each man has lived his life and they have had the opportunity thoroughly to observe his conduct and behaviour.¹⁵

5.2 And we note that this procedure was indeed observed in your own case when our colleague Sabinus was being appointed: the office of bishop was conferred upon him and hands were laid upon him in replacement of Basilides, following the verdict of the whole congregation and in conformity with the judgment of the bishops who had there convened with the congregation as well as of those who had written in to you about him.¹⁶

5.3 This appointment was validly administered; it is not possible for Basilides to invalidate it now that his criminal offences have been uncovered and indeed laid bare by his own acknowledgement of his guilt¹⁷ simply by his going off to Rome and there hoodwinking our colleague Stephen, who is far removed from the scene and unacquainted with what has in truth transpired. Basilides was seeking that he might thereby contrive to be reinstated in the bishopric from which he had so justly been deposed.¹⁸ The upshot of all these efforts of his is that so far from succeeding in abolishing his felonies, he has actually augmented them by now adding to his former sins the further transgression of fraud and deception.

5.4 For he indeed is not so much to be blamed who has through negligence allowed himself to be duped as he is to be damned who

has through fraudulence managed to dupe another. But even if Basilides may have succeeded in imposing upon men, upon God he cannot so succeed, inasmuch as it is written: *God is not mocked*. In the case of Martialis, likewise, deception can be of no avail to him either: he still has no right to hold his bishopric, being enmeshed, as he is also, in the guilt of such grievous offences. In the words of admonition uttered by the Apostle: *The bishop must be blameless, being the steward of God*.¹⁹

6.1 Now, dearly beloved brethren, as you write and as our colleagues Felix and Sabinus are claiming²⁰ and as another Felix, from Caesaraugusta, a man devout in the faith and a champion of the truth, indicates in his letter also,²¹ Basilides and Martialis have been contaminated with abominable certificates of idolatry.

6.2 Not only that. In addition to the defilement of his certificate, when Basilides lay on his sickbed, he blasphemed against God. He has confessed that he did so blaspheme; and being stricken in conscience he relinquished his office of bishop of his own volition and took himself to do penance, beseeching God's mercy and accounting himself most fortunate if he might be lucky enough to be admitted to communion even as a layman.²² And as for Martialis, not only has he long been a habitu   of the banquets of some pagan social club, participating in their shameful and obscene entertainments; his own sons he had buried in the manner of pagans as members of that same sodality, interred in the company of strangers among heathen graves.²³ Moreover, at a public hearing before a procurator ducenarius, Martialis attested that he had conformed with the idolatrous orders and that he had denounced Christ.²⁴

Basilides and Martialis are now held caught in the snares of all these crimes of theirs—as indeed of many another grievous offence; 6.3 it is, therefore, useless for such persons to attempt to lay claim to episcopal office for themselves. For it is more than obvious that men of such character are incapable of presiding over the Church of Christ, nor is it right that they should offer sacrifices to God. And this is especially so since some time ago now our colleague and fellow bishop Cornelius, peacemaker and man of justice and, by the grace of the Lord, blessed with the dignity of martyrdom, joined with us and with every one of the bishops throughout the world in decreeing that it was indeed possible for men of such character to be admitted

to do penance but that they were to be debarred from holding clerical office and episcopal rank.²⁵

7. And so, dearly beloved brethren, you should not be disconcerted if in these last days with some people faith uncertainly wavers, fear of God impiously vacillates, and peace and harmony do not endure. All these things, it has been predicted, are to happen at the end of time; it has been foretold by the utterance of the Lord as well as by the testimony of the apostles that when the world begins to decline and the Antichrist makes his approach, everything good will also begin to fail but all that is evil and wicked will flourish.²⁶

8.1 All the same, in the last days we may be, yet within the Church of God the vitality of the gospel has not so far languished nor is the health of Christian faith and virtue so far enfeebled that there does not still survive a portion of the bishops who adamantly refuse to give way under the general moral collapse and spiritual ruin of the present time; they stand strong and steadfast, in awe and fear of God, guarding the honour of their divine sovereign and the dignity of their own episcopal estate.

8.2 For our part, we never overlook nor lose sight of the fact that while all the others succumbed and gave way, Mattathias stoutly championed the law of God; that while the Jews, faltering in spirit, wandered far from the practice of the true religion, Elijah valiantly stood his ground and carried on the fight; that in the case of Daniel, so far from being cowed by the loneliness of an alien land or by the harassment of constant persecution, he bore many times brave and glorious witness to his faith; and that, similarly, the three youths loyally stood up against the fires of the Babylonians, intimidated neither by menaces nor by their own tender years, and though held captive themselves they vanquished the king, their conqueror.²⁷

8.3 There is, to be sure, a gang of traitors and fellow travellers who are now endeavouring to rise up against the Church from within the Church and to undermine faith as well as truth. But, far more importantly, the majority in the Church do still retain sincerity of heart, integrity of devotion, and souls dedicated exclusively to their Lord and God. So far from the faithlessness of these others crushing and destroying their Christian faith, it rather serves to give that faith fresh spirit and ardour for glory.²⁸ As the blessed Apostle says in his

words of exhortation: *What if some of them have fallen from faith? Do you imagine that their faithlessness has made void the faithfulness of God? Far from it. For God is true, but every man a liar.*²⁹ If, then, every man is a liar and God alone is true, then we who are the servants of God and above all His priests have no choice but to reject the lies and errors of men and to abide in the truth of God by preserving the precepts the Lord has given us.

9.1 And so, dearly beloved brothers, even though there are some to be found among our colleagues who fancy that the discipline taught us by God is to be ignored and who are, therefore, rash enough to be in communion with Basilides and Martialis, yet that ought not to trouble our faith. For in the Psalms the Holy Spirit threatens men who so act with these words: *But you hate my teachings, and my words you have cast behind you. On seeing a thief you hastened to join him, and your lot you have shared with adulterers.* The Holy Spirit here reveals that they become partners and sharers in the other men's sins who have joined themselves in union with sinners.

9.2 Moreover, the apostle Paul says precisely the same thing when he writes: *Whisperers, scandalmongers, hateful to God, insulting, arrogant, boastful, creators of evil: they knew well enough God's strict justice, yet they failed to understand that those who act like that are deserving of death—not just those who practise such evil themselves but also those who lend their approval to such evildoers.*³⁰ He says: *Those who act like that are deserving of death;* he is demonstrating and proving that not just those who practise evil but also those who lend their approval to those who do such things deserve to die and be brought to punishment—that is to say, those who share in unlawful communion with evildoers, with sinners and with the unrepentant, those who are contaminated through their contacts with the guilty, those who being united with such people in sin cannot be separated from them either in punishment.³¹

9.3 Accordingly, dearly beloved brothers, we applaud as well as commend in this matter your religious scruples and your soundness of faith; and insofar as we can, we do exhort you by this letter of ours not to join in sacrilegious communion with profane and polluted bishops but with holy fear to go on preserving the soundness, sincerity, and steadfastness of your faith.

I wish that you, cherished brethren, may ever fare well.³²

LETTER 68

*Cyprian sends greetings to Stephen his brother.*¹

1.1 My dearly beloved brother, our colleague Faustinus, who dwells at Lyons, has written to me on more than one occasion informing me of matters which I am aware have certainly been brought to your notice also;² and you have been informed not just by Faustinus but also by our other fellow bishops in the same province.³ They have reported that Marcianus, who dwells at Arles, has allied himself with Novatian;⁴ he has departed from the truth of the catholic Church and from the harmony of our corporate body of bishops by espousing the perverse and pitiless tenets of that presumptuous heresy. For by it the door is closed in the face of God's penitent servants even though they bewail their sins and knock at the Church with tears and sighs of grief;⁵ they are shut out from the comforts and consolations of God's loving-kindness and His fatherly tenderness; the injured may not be let in to have their wounds cared for; instead, they are abandoned, without hope of being reconciled and restored to communion, they are cast outside, to be torn to pieces by the wolves and to fall prey to the devil.

1.2 It is incumbent upon us, dearly beloved brother, to help remedy and rectify such a situation as this;⁶ we must remain mindful of the mercies of God as we so balance the scales of justice in our government of the Church that to sinners we do indeed exhibit the full censure of our condemnation but without at the same time depriving them of the medicine of God's compassion and clemency, which enables the wounded to be cured and the fallen to get back up again on their feet.

2.1 It is, therefore, your duty to write in the most explicit terms to our fellow bishops in Gaul: they should not suffer Marcianus, that obstinate and arrogant enemy of the mercy of God and the salvation of his brothers, to continue any further to scoff at our college of bishops, taunting us on the grounds that he does not appear so far to have been excommunicated by us—and yet it has long been his proud and public boast that he is an adherent of Novatian's and a follower of his

intransigence, and that he has separated himself from our communion; whereas Novatian himself, the man whom he follows, has long since been excommunicated and condemned as an enemy of the Church.⁸ Indeed, when he sent envoys to us over in Africa, desiring to be received into communion with us, he got back instead from our Council here (we were a large gathering of bishops) the following verdict:⁹ that he was now outside the Church; that it was, therefore, not possible for any one of us to admit him into communion, for at a time when Cornelius had already been appointed bishop within the catholic Church by the judgment of God and the choice of clergy and laity, he had attempted to erect a godless altar, establish a spurious chair, and offer up sacrilegious sacrifices in opposition to the true bishop;¹⁰ and that, accordingly, if he were anxious to regain his senses and to return to sanity of mind and counsel, then he must become a penitent and come back to the Church as a suppliant.

2.2 How senseless it must be, dearly beloved brother, if, while Novatian has now for some time been thus rejected, repudiated, and excommunicated by the bishops of God throughout the world,¹¹ we should even today allow his toadies still to mock at us and to continue to sit as judges over the solemn majesty and dignity of God's Church.¹²

3.1 I exhort you, therefore, to direct letters to that province and to the faithful who dwell at Arles, urging that after Marcianus has been excommunicated, a successor be appointed in his place¹³ and that the flock of Christ, which thanks to Marcianus has remained scattered to this day and which he has heartlessly neglected despite all the injuries it has suffered, may be mustered together once again.¹⁴ Many of our brothers have died there over these recent years, deprived of reconciliation; let that be enough. Let comfort be brought at least to the remainder who are still alive; they pass their days and nights in lamentation, supplicating God's fatherly mercies and entreating us for solace and relief.

3.2 Now, dearly beloved brother, there is good reason why our body of bishops is at once so generously large and yet so tightly bound together by the glue of mutual concord and by the bond of unity:¹⁵ it is so that should anyone from our sacred college attempt to form a heretical sect and thus to savage and devastate the flock of

Christ, there should be others to come to the rescue, and being practical and kindhearted shepherds, they should gather the Lord's sheep back into the fold.

3.3 Furthermore, consider this: if, at sea, some harbour should have its protective breakwaters breached, rendering it hazardous and dangerous to shipping, do not sailors then steer their ships towards other harbours nearby where they can find an approach that is safe, an entrance that is secure, and an anchorage that is sound?¹⁶ Or if, on the highroad, some inn should be beset and occupied by brigands who then lie in wait ready to attack and seize any man who steps inside,¹⁷ do not travellers, getting word of its reputation, repair to other inns on their route which are safer? There they can find lodgings they can trust and accommodation where wayfarers may safely rest.

3.4 These examples, dearly beloved brother, must now be applied to our own case. Our brothers have successfully avoided the rocks of Marcianus and are trying to make for the safe harbours of the Church; we should extend to them a warm welcome, showing them every kindness and goodwill,¹⁸ and we should furnish these travellers with an inn such as is described in the Gospel, where those who have been wounded and injured by brigands may be welcomed, cared for, and sheltered by the innkeeper.¹⁹

4.1 Indeed, what finer or worthier service can there be for church leaders than with zeal and solicitude to make provision for the nurture and preservation of their sheep by the application of healing remedies? Especially so, as the Lord speaks with these words: *The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not comforted, the strayed you have not recalled, the lost you have not sought. And so my sheep are all scattered, for there are no shepherds; they have become fodder for all the beasts of the field and there has been no one to search for them and call them back. This, therefore, is what the Lord says: Behold, I come against the shepherds and I shall seek out my sheep from out of their hands and I shall drive them away, so that they may not feed my sheep: no more will they feed them and I shall deliver my sheep from out of their mouths, and with justice shall I feed them.*²⁰ 4.2. Thus does the Lord threaten such shepherds who allow His own sheep to be neglected and lost.

What then, dearly beloved brother, ought we to be doing but exercising every zeal in gathering in and nursing back to health the

sheep of Christ, and applying the salve of His fatherly compassion for healing the wounds of the fallen? For the Lord also utters these words of warning in the Gospel: *It is not the healthy who are in need of a doctor but those who are sick.*²¹ For though we are many shepherds, yet the flock which we feed is but one, and it is our duty to gather in and tenderly to care for every single one of the sheep which Christ has won by His own sufferings and blood. Our brothers come in mourning and supplication: we must not allow others heartlessly to spurn them and with arrogant presumption to crush them underfoot.

4.3 We must be mindful of the words of Scripture: *But the haughty man, the man who brags of himself, he will accomplish nothing even though his greed is as insatiable as the grave.* All men of that kind the Lord denounces and condemns with these words in the Gospel: *You are those who make yourselves righteous in the eyes of men. But God discerns what is in your hearts, for what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the eyes of God.*²²

Abominable and detestable are the terms He uses to describe those who are self-satisfied, who are puffed up with pride and who pretentiously arrogate powers to themselves.²³ Marcianus has become one of these; he has allied himself with Novatian and has thus proved himself to be an enemy of mercy and compassion. He has no right, therefore, to impose sentence upon others, for, in fact, he is to receive one himself. He should not act as if he is personally to sit in judgment over the entire college of bishops, for, in fact, the whole body of bishops has already passed judgment upon him.

5.1 I will explain. It is our duty to preserve the honour of those glorious predecessors of ours, the blessed martyrs Cornelius and Lucius.²⁴ But much as we, for our part, honour their memory, you, dearly beloved brother, far more than anyone else, are in duty bound to bring honour upon that memory and to uphold it, by exerting the full weight of your personal authority; after all, you are the one who has been appointed to replace and succeed them.²⁵ And they, being filled with the spirit of the Lord and the glory of martyrdom, declared that reconciliation was to be granted to the fallen, and they indicated in their letters that when penance had been done, its reward of reconciliation and restoration to communion was not to be denied.²⁶

5.2 And throughout the world without exception we all made

the same declaration on the matter.²⁷ For it was not possible that there should be divergence of opinion among us, seeing that there was in us but one and the same Spirit.²⁸ Hence it is plainly evident that a man does not hold the truth of the Holy Spirit with the rest of his colleagues when we find that his opinions are different from theirs.

Let us know who precisely it is who is appointed to replace Marcianus at Arles,²⁹ so that we may be informed as to whom we are to direct our brethren and to whom we are to write ourselves.³⁰

I wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well.

LETTER 69

*Cyprian sends greetings to Magnus, his son.*¹

1.1 Dearly beloved son, you have been moved by your habitual scrupulous piety to put an inquiry to me, poorly qualified though I am to answer it. You ask whether it is obligatory that those who come over to us from Novatian ought to be included in the company of other heretics and that after his profane washing they are to be baptized and sanctified within the catholic Church by means of the one, true, and lawful baptism, that is to say, that of the Church.²

On this matter we can speak only as far as the capacity of our faith allows, while relying upon the sacred truth of the holy Scriptures,³ and our view is that without exception all heretics and schismatics are without any powers or rights whatsoever.⁴ And, therefore, no exception ought to be, indeed can be, made in the case of Novatian. He continues to be like the others, outside the Church, he acts against the peace and charity of Christ; he must be reckoned as one of the adversaries and antichrists.

1.2 For when our Lord Jesus Christ stated in His Gospel that His enemies were those who were not with Him, He did not specify any particular type of heresy. Rather, He indicated by His words that without exception all who were not with Him and who did not gather the flock with Him but scattered it were His adversaries. The

words He spoke are: *He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.*⁵

1.3 Likewise the blessed apostle John, for his part too, drew no distinctions between any one heresy or schism and another, neither did he separate off and set apart any special group among them. No. He termed antichrists all without distinction who had forsaken the Church and who were working against the Church. Here are his words: *You have heard that the Antichrist is coming. But even today there are many antichrists. From that we can recognize that it is the end of time. They have forsaken us, but they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have remained with us.*⁶ From these words the conclusion is plain: all men are adversaries of the Lord and antichrists if it is established that they have withdrawn from charity and from the unity of the catholic Church.

1.4 And what is more, the Lord declares in His Gospel using these words: *But if he does not respect even the Church, you should regard him as a heathen and a publican.*⁷ Now if those who do not respect the Church are to be counted as heathens and publicans, then surely the enemies of the Church who rebel against her, who forge counterfeit altars, illegal priesthoods, sacrilegious sacrifices, and spurious titles,⁸ must all the more be reckoned as heathens and publicans. It must be so, seeing that even those whose sins are less grave, who merely fail to respect the Church, are adjudged by the Lord's own sentence to be so many heathens and publicans.

2.1 That the Church is one is declared by the Holy Spirit in the Song of Songs, speaking in the person of Christ: *My dove, my perfect one, is but one: she is the only one of her mother, the favourite of her who bore her.* And the Spirit again says of her: *An enclosed garden is my sister, my bride, a sealed fountain, a well of living water.*⁹

Now if the bride of Christ (that is to say, the Church) is an enclosed garden, then it is just not possible that something which is closed up should lie wide open to outsiders and aliens. And if it is a sealed fountain, then it is just not possible for a man to drink from it or to be sealed at it¹⁰ if, being placed on the outside, he is without access to that fountain. And if it is the one and only well of living water and it, too, is found on the inside, then it is just not possible for a man who is placed on the outside to be given life and sanctifi-

cation through that water; they and they alone who are on the inside are granted permission to drink of it or to make use of it in any way.

2.2 This same point Peter also affirmed when he showed that the Church is one and that only those who are within the Church are able to be baptized: *In the ark of Noah, he said, a very few men (eight souls all told) were saved by water. And it is in just the same manner that baptism will save you also.* By this testimony he established that the ark of Noah (one only) was a type of the Church (also one). And if at that time it had been possible for a man, not in the ark of Noah, to be saved by water during that baptism of the world when it was being purged and purified, then it would also be possible today for a man not in the Church to be given life by baptism, whereas it is to the Church alone that the power to baptize has been granted.¹¹

2.3 Moreover, Paul also pointed this out even more explicitly and directly when writing to the Ephesians with these words: *Christ loved the Church and He gave Himself up for her so that He might sanctify her, washing and cleansing her by water.*¹² Now if there is only the one Church which is thus loved by Christ and if she alone is cleansed by His washing, how can it be that a man who is not in the Church should either be loved by Christ or be cleansed and purged by His washing?

3.1 It follows, therefore, that as the Church alone possesses the life-giving water and she alone has the power to baptize and cleanse men, whoever claims that anyone can be baptized and sanctified with Novatian has first of all convincingly to demonstrate that Novatian is within the Church or that he presides over the Church.¹³ For the Church is one; and being one, she cannot at the one and the same time be both inside and outside.

3.2 So if the Church is with Novatian, she could not have been with Cornelius. But if, on the other hand, she was with Cornelius (who was lawfully ordained as the successor to Bishop Fabian and upon whom the Lord bestowed, in addition to his episcopal dignity, the glory of martyrdom as well),¹⁴ it must be that Novatian is not in the Church, neither can he be reckoned to be a bishop: he has flouted the tradition of the Gospels and the apostles, for he is not the successor to anyone and he has his origins in no one but himself.¹⁵ And yet, if a man has not been ordained to office within the Church, it is quite impossible that the Church should be his to have or to hold.

4.1 The authoritative testimony of Holy Scripture makes it perfectly clear that the Church is not outside, that it cannot be split or divided against itself, but rather that it is a unified household that remains indivisible and inseparable. The scriptural text concerns the sacred rite of the passover lamb (the lamb signifying Christ): *In one household shall it be eaten; and you shall not cast from the house any of the flesh outside.* We also find this same message indicated in the case of Rahab (she, too, being a figure of the Church) when she received these words of instruction: *You shall gather to yourself into your house your father and your mother, your brothers and your father's entire household, and everyone who goes beyond the door of your house outside shall be guilty of his own ruin.*¹⁶

4.2 Through this prophetic figure we are being told that those who would live and escape the destruction of the world must be gathered into one house and one house only (that is, into the Church). But if anyone goes outside from that gathering (that is, if anyone, despite having obtained grace inside the Church, goes away and departs from the Church), he will be guilty of his own ruin. In other words, he will have only himself to blame for his own damnation. And the apostle Paul explains all this clearly by directing us to shun heretics as perverted, sinful, and self-condemned.¹⁷ Such a man, the heretic, is truly the one who will be guilty of his own ruin; he is a man not cast out from the Church by his bishop but one who deserts it of his own volition; he stands self-condemned through his own heretical presumption.

5.1 And that is the explanation why, in order to make us realize that this oneness proceeds from divine authority, the Lord pronounces these words: *I and the Father are one.* And in order to relate His own Church to that oneness, He further says: *And there shall be one flock and one shepherd.*¹⁸ Now, if there is but one flock, how can there be counted as one of that flock someone who does not belong to its number? How, too, can a man be considered as its shepherd, if the true shepherd is still there presiding in the Church of God, having been duly appointed in succession to another,¹⁹ whereas he is the successor to no one but has his beginning with himself? By having taken that action he turns himself into an alien and an outsider, an enemy of the peace of the Lord and the oneness of God, no longer dwelling in the house of God (in other words, in the Church of God);

and in that house none may dwell except those who are of one mind and heart, as the Holy Spirit proclaims in the Psalms: *He is the God who makes men who are of one mind dwell together in a house.*²⁰

5.2 And what is more, the very sacrifices offered by our Lord demonstrate how in Christianity men are of one mind, linked together by the bonds of a powerful and unbreakable charity. For when the Lord calls bread His own body—and bread is a conglomerate of many individual grains, made into one—He signifies that we, the people whom He bore, are united into one.²¹ Similarly, when He calls wine His own blood—and wine is pressed from a great many clusters of individual grapes, squeezed into one juice—He again indicates that we, His flock, being a multitude gathered together, are mingled and joined into one.

Now if Novatian is really united to this bread of the Lord, if even he is actually mingled with the cup of Christ, then he will obviously be capable of possessing the graces of the Church's one and only baptism—provided, that is, that it has been established that he keeps the unity of the Church.

6.1 And Holy Scripture further demonstrates how unbreakable are those sacred bonds of unity, how forlorn of hope men are and how they bring utter ruin down upon themselves from the anger of God if they cause a schism and, abandoning their own bishop, set up for themselves another spurious bishop outside the Church. For in the Book of Kings we read that the ten tribes split themselves off from the tribe of Judah and Benjamin and, abandoning their own king, set up for themselves another outside: *And the Lord, Scripture says, was very angry with all the seed of Israel: He swept them aside, giving them over to be despoiled, so He might eventually remove them out of His sight, for Israel had been dispersed from the house of David and they had set up for themselves Jeroboam, the son of Nabat, as their king.*²² Scripture states that the Lord was very angry and had given them over to perdition for the reason that they had been dispersed from unity and had set up for themselves another as their king.

6.2 And so great was that anger of the Lord against those who had caused the schism that even when the man of God was sent to Jeroboam to reprove him for his sins and to threaten him with the vengeance that would come upon him, that man of God was still forbidden even to eat bread or drink water with them.²³ But when he

failed to heed this prohibition but, contrary to God's command, did eat with them, he was straightway smitten by the might of God's righteous wrath, being attacked by a lion on his journey back and mauled to death.

In the face of that, does anyone among you dare to assert that we can share in common with schismatics the saving water and heaven-sent graces of baptism when it is not allowed for us to share in common with them even ordinary drink, the drink of this world?²⁴

6.3 Moreover, in His Gospel the Lord is yet more insistent and He makes it even clearer to our understanding that those who in those days had split themselves off from the tribe of Judah and Benjamin and, abandoning Jerusalem, had seceded to Samaria, were to be reckoned as so many heathen and Gentiles. For when He first sent forth His disciples on their mission of salvation, He charged them in these words: *Do not go on the road to the Gentiles and do not enter the city of the Samaritans.*²⁵ Sending them in the first instance to the Jews, He orders that the Gentiles are, as yet, to be passed by. But by adding that the city of the Samaritans was likewise to be avoided—where schismatics were to be found—He demonstrates that schismatics are to be ranked in the same category as Gentiles.

7.1 Here someone may interpose with the following objection: Novatian, he may contend, observes the same law as the catholic Church, he baptizes using the same credal formula as we also do,²⁶ he acknowledges the same God the Father, the same Christ the Son, the same Holy Spirit, and, therefore, he may claim the power to baptize, seeing that, it would appear, his baptismal interrogation is no different from ours.²⁷

Whoever thinks he should raise such an objection has to realize first and foremost that there is no one binding credal formula common to us and to schismatics, neither is there any common baptismal interrogation. 7.2 For when *they* say "Do you believe in the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting through the holy Church?" they are being fraudulent in putting such a question, since they have no such church. Then again, out of their own mouths they admit that forgiveness of sins can only be granted "through the holy Church," and seeing that they do not have that Church, they demonstrate that with them there can be no forgiveness of sins.²⁸

8.1 In the second place, they can derive no support either from

the claim that they acknowledge the same God the Father as we do, the same Christ the Son, and the same Holy Spirit. Consider Core, Dathan, and Abiron. They acknowledged the same God as Aaron the priest and Moses; they lived by the same law, the same religious observances; they called upon the one, true God, the God whom they were in duty bound to call upon and to worship. Despite all this, they overstepped the duties of their own station:²⁹ in opposition to Aaron the priest, who had lawfully received the priesthood through the favour of God and the appointment of the Lord, they claimed for themselves the right to offer sacrifice. Straightway they were struck down by the divine power, paying the penalty for their unlawful attempt: sacrifices offered impiously and unlawfully, opposing God's rightful appointment, could be neither acceptable nor efficacious.

8.2 Even the very censers in which they had made their unlawful offering of incense the priests were not to use for the future. They were to be turned, instead, into a memorial of God's outrage and vengeance for the correction of posterity: at the Lord's command, they were melted down and, thus purged by fire, were drawn out into beaten-metal plates and affixed to the altar. As the words of divine Scripture have it: *To be a memorial to the children of Israel that no stranger, not being of the seed of Aaron, should ever come forward to offer incense before the Lord, lest he be like Core.*³⁰

8.3 And yet, in their case, they had caused no schism, they had not gone off to be outside God's Church, they had not rebelled against God's priests, shamelessly declaring open warfare. But that is what these are now doing, splitting the Church apart, rebelling against the peace and unity of Christ, attempting to set up a bishop's chair of their own, and to arrogate to themselves the rights of succession to a bishop's powers,³¹ claiming the lawful right to sacrifice and to baptize. But how are they to be effective in what they undertake, how can they obtain anything from God through their unlawful attempts, seeing that, in opposition to God's will, they are contriving to do what has not been lawfully granted to them? Why is it that those who espouse the cause of Novatian and other such schismatics continue to maintain in vain that with them anyone can be baptized and sanctified by saving baptism? For it is plain to see that he who so baptizes has no lawful right to baptize.

9.1 And we can get a clearer appreciation of the severity of

God's judgment against rebellion of this kind from the fact that in this sort of wickedness it is not only the ringleaders and initiators of it who are marked out for punishment but those who have any part in it as well—unless, that is, they have separated themselves from the company of those evil men. For through Moses the Lord gives the following command: *Separate yourselves from the tents of these hardened sinners and do not touch anything that is theirs, for fear that you may perish along with them in their sin.*³² And then the Lord brought to pass that threat He had made through Moses: everyone who had not separated himself from Core, Dathan, and Abiron had to pay immediately in full the punishment for being in such impious company.

9.2 By this instance we are given clear proof that every man will be considered blameworthy and, therefore, punishable if he has had the impious temerity to join up with schismatics in opposition to their bishops, their appointed leaders. It is exactly as the Holy Spirit, speaking through the prophet Hosea, also testifies by means of these words: *Their sacrifices are as the bread of mourning; all who eat of them shall be defiled.*³³ By that we are being clearly taught that every follower without exception is to be linked in punishment with his leaders in that he has been defiled by their sin.

10.1 And what can they possibly have by way of merit in the sight of God when God Himself directs that punishment should be inflicted upon them? How are such men, then, capable of justifying and sanctifying those whom they baptize when, as enemies of the bishops, they are attempting to lay claim to powers that belong to others, that are unlawful for them to hold, and that have not in any way been rightfully conceded to them? We are not, however, taken by surprise that Novatianists themselves should put up a fight in defence of their own special brand of depravity. After all, everyone naturally tries to defend his own actions; no one wants to give in easily in the face of defeat, fully aware though he is that his actions are unlawful. 10.2 But what does cause us surprise—or, I should rather say, cause us to weep in outrage—is this: there are followers of Christ who take their stand in support of these antichrists, there are quislings of the faith and traitors of the Church who are getting up within the very ranks of the Church to fight against the Church.

Now obstinately unteachable these supporters may otherwise be, but at least they do admit this point, viz. that no one, whether

heretic or schismatic, can anywhere possess the Holy Spirit and that (so they contend) while they may indeed be able to baptize, they are nevertheless, in consequence, not able to impart the Holy Spirit. That is just where we have got them: we can prove that they cannot possibly baptize who do not possess the Holy Spirit.³⁴

11.1 Now in baptism we are each forgiven our sins; and the Lord asserts clearly in His Gospel that sins can be forgiven only through those who possess the Holy Spirit. For when He was sending forth His disciples after the resurrection, He spoke to them in these words: *Just as the Father sent me, so too I am sending you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you have forgiven, they shall be forgiven him; whose sins you have retained, they shall be retained.*³⁵ In this passage He is showing that he alone has the power to baptize and grant forgiveness of sins who possesses the Holy Spirit.

11.2 And consider further. Christ our Lord Himself was to be baptized by John, but John received beforehand the Holy Spirit while he was still in his mother's womb.³⁶ This was done to make it absolutely clear that only those who possess the Holy Spirit are able to baptize.

We challenge, then, those who espouse the cause of these heretics and schismatics to answer us this: do they, or do they not, possess the Holy Spirit?

11.3 If they do possess the Holy Spirit, then we ask further: why do those who have been 'baptized' with them, when they come over to us have hands laid upon them for receiving the Spirit, whereas the Spirit would most assuredly have already been received at the time³⁷ it could have been received had the Spirit been there? But if, on the other hand, no heretic or schismatic, being outside the Church, imparts the Holy Spirit, and if, for this reason, hands are laid upon them in our Church so that with us they may receive what neither exists with them nor can be imparted by them, then, that being so, it is manifest that no forgiveness of sins either can be granted through those who beyond doubt do not possess the Holy Spirit themselves.

The conclusion must be, accordingly, that if they would wish to receive the forgiveness of sins, to be sanctified, and to become temples of God in accordance with God's ordinance as laid down in the

truth of the Gospels, all without exception who come over from those adversaries and antichrists to the Church of Christ must be baptized with the baptism of the Church.

12.1 My dearly beloved son, you have put a second inquiry to me. You ask my opinion concerning those who receive the grace of God at a time of serious ill-health: Are they to be regarded as authentic Christians even though they have not been bathed, but merely sprinkled, in the waters of salvation?³⁸

On this issue, in all diffidence and humility we cannot lay down a ready-made judgment for others; each should conclude as he thinks best and act as he concludes. 12.2 But our own personal judgment, in so far as our lowly talents comprehend the problem, is as follows.

Blessings that come from God cannot in any part be maimed or emasculated; in the case where there is complete and total faith on the parts of giver and receiver alike, there cannot possibly occur any diminution in the draught drawn from God's bounteous flow.³⁹ For washing away the stains of our sins in the sacrament of salvation is quite different from washing our flesh in an ordinary bath. In the latter case, to clean off the filth on our skin and body we have need of cakes of washing soda and like aids as well as a bathtub or bathing pool⁴⁰ if we want our miserable body to be washed and cleansed, whereas the heart of the believer is washed and the soul of man is cleansed by quite different means—by the merits of faith. In the case of those who receive the sacrament of salvation as a matter of urgency, through God's indulgent generosity His ceremonial, though not the fullest,⁴¹ still confers His full benefits upon those who believe.

12.3 And no one need be perturbed that when the sick obtain the grace of the Lord, we see that water just sprinkled or poured over them.⁴² For through the mouth of the prophet Ezechiel Holy Scripture states in these words: *I shall sprinkle over you clean water, and from all your uncleanness and from all your idolatry you will be cleansed. And I shall cleanse you, and give to you a new heart, and a new spirit I shall give within you.* Likewise in Numbers we read: *And the man, too, who has been unclean until the evening shall be purified on the third and on the seventh day, and he will be cleansed. But if he has not been purified on the third and on the seventh day, he will not be cleansed, and his soul will be banished beyond the boundaries of Israel, for the water of sprinkling has not been sprinkled over*

*him. And again: And the Lord spoke to Moses saying: Take the Levites from out of the midst of the children of Israel and purify them. And this is what you shall do to them to purify them. You shall sprinkle over them the water of purification. And again: The water of sprinkling is a purification.*⁴³

From these texts it follows clearly that sprinkling with water has just the same effect as bathing in the waters of salvation, and provided that these things are done within the Church where the faith of both giver and receiver is whole and entire, everything stands valid and can be completed and perfected through that true faith and the wondrous power of the Lord.

13.1 And what is more, there are some who actually dub those who have thus obtained the grace of God through His saving water and lawful faith “clinics” instead of Christians. I can find no source for their use of this term—unless they have come across these “clinics” in the works of Hippocrates or Soranus as they pore over their recondite pages.⁴⁴ 13.2 I am familiar with one such “clinic” myself, the one in the Gospel. And I know that in the case of that paralytic, whereas he was frail from being bedridden over many long years, yet his weakness was no obstacle at all to his attaining from heaven strength in the fullest degree; and not only did the Lord’s loving-kindness raise him from his bed, it even enabled him actually to pick up his own bed, such was the restoration and reinvigoration of his strength.⁴⁵

13.3 And so, insofar as it is vouchsafed to us through faith to perceive and understand the matter, my verdict is this: whosoever by the law and rights of faith has obtained within the Church the grace of God shall be judged to be a legitimate Christian. But if anyone is of the view that such people have obtained nothing on the grounds that they have only been sprinkled with the water of salvation, if they are, in fact, empty and without grace, then let them not be misled; if they recover from their serious illness and regain their health, let them be baptized. But if it is not possible for those who have already been sanctified with the baptism of the Church to be baptized, why should they lay a stumbling block before those who have acted in all good faith, reliant upon God’s loving-kindness?⁴⁶

Or is it that they are arguing that while they have indeed obtained the Lord’s grace, they have gained the Holy Spirit and the gifts of God only in a smaller and lesser measure: they are certainly to be

reckoned as Christians but not to be put all the same on an equal level with other Christians?

14.1 Here they need reminding that the Holy Spirit is not given by measure but is poured out completely upon the believer.⁴⁷ If the day dawns for all men equally, if the sun's light is shed over all equally and fairly, how much more does Christ, the true sun and day, bestow with equal fairness within His Church the light of everlasting life. In Exodus we see recorded a type of this equality when manna flowed down from heaven; it prefigured what was to come, portending the nourishment of heavenly Bread, the food of Christ who was yet to come. And in the case of manna, the measure of an omer was gathered for all equally, without distinction of age or sex.⁴⁸ 14.2 From this was shown that the mercy of Christ and the grace of heaven, which were still to come, are distributed in equal shares to all mankind without discrimination of sex, without distinction of years, without respect of persons,⁴⁹ and that the gift of spiritual grace is poured out upon all of God's people. To be sure, that spiritual grace, received equally by all believers in baptism, may be diminished or increased by our subsequent conduct of our own lives. It is just as in the Gospel when the Lord's seed is sown evenly, but according to the different types of soil in one place it washes away, while in others it produces superabundance of fruit, yielding returns many times over—thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. Likewise we read that each man is summoned to receive his denarius;⁵⁰ why, then, I ask, should we diminish by our human estimation that which is distributed by God in equal shares?

15.1 At this point someone may be troubled by the notion that there have been some who after being baptized when ill continued still to be assailed by unclean spirits.⁵¹ Such a person has to realize that while the devil can have power to persist in his malice all the way up as far as the saving waters, in baptism he loses all the venom in his malice. We see this exemplified in the case of King Pharaoh: he put up a long struggle and persisted in his treachery, being able to succeed in this lengthy resistance of his until he came to the water. But on reaching the water not only was he vanquished, he was destroyed.⁵² Now that sea was the sacred prefigurement of baptism, as the blessed apostle Paul declares when he says: *I would not have you ignorant, my brothers, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed*

*through the sea, and all were baptized in Moses both in the cloud and in the sea. To which he added the words: All these things came to pass as symbols for us.*⁵³

15.2 Even in our own day this continues to be the case. Through the agency of exorcists, the human voice combined with the power of God scourges and scorches and torments the devil;⁵⁴ and though he may profess time and again that he is departing and leaving the people of God alone, he lies in his words and like the Pharaoh of earlier days he persists in perpetrating the same sort of guile and fraud. But when such people come forward⁵⁵ to receive the waters of salvation and the sanctification of baptism, we ought to be convinced and firmly believe that the devil is there overpowered and that through God's mercy the man now dedicated to Him is set free.

Imagine it were possible for scorpions and serpents, which exercise their powers on dry land, to continue to exercise their powers when cast into water and there to retain their special venom.⁵⁶ In that case wicked spirits also—and they are called scorpions and serpents who are, in fact, crushed underfoot by us through the power the Lord gives us⁵⁷—they would be able to stay on in a man's body after his baptism and sanctification when in fact the Holy Spirit takes up His dwelling there.

16.1 The facts of our own experience make us aware of this also: people baptized in extreme necessity on their sickbed and having thus gained grace are delivered of the unclean spirit which has previously been troubling them. They live on, held in honour and esteem in the Church and they daily advance and increase in heavenly grace as they continue to grow in faith.⁵⁸ By contrast, however, we often find that of those who are baptized when in good health, some upon falling into sin later are seized with trembling at the return of their unclean spirit.⁵⁹

Hence we can plainly see that in baptism the devil is driven out by the faith of the believer and that he comes back again if that faith should subsequently falter.

16.2 I suppose it's possible for some people to believe it right that whereas they are to be judged baptized who are in reality polluted with unholy water in the company of adversaries and antichrists outside the Church, yet these people who are baptized inside the Church can be thought to have gained the grace and mercy of God

only in lesser measure. Those who believe so would hold heretics in such high respect that those who come from them are not questioned whether they have been bathed or sprinkled, whether they are to be regarded as “clinics” or peripatetics.⁶⁰ Yet in our own case they disparage the soundness and truth of our faith, they belittle the grandeur and sanctity of the baptism of the Church.

17 I have replied to your letter, dearly beloved son, as far as our meagre abilities have allowed us and I have revealed, as well as we can, what our own views are. But we lay down no regulation for others: each church leader is free to determine his own opinion for himself, knowing that he is one day to render to the Lord an account of his own conduct,⁶¹ as the blessed apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Romans: *each one of us will give an account for himself. Let us, therefore, not judge one another.*⁶²

I wish that you, dearly beloved son, may ever fare well.

LETTER 70

*Cyprian, Liberalis, Caldonius, Junius, Primus, Caecilius, Polycarp, Nicomedes, Felix, Marrutius, Successus, Lucianus, Honoratus, Fortunatus, Victor, Donatus, Lucius, Herculanus, Pomponius, Demetrius, Quintus, Saturninus, Marcus, another Saturninus, another Donatus, Rogatianus, Sedatus, Tertullus, Hortensianus, also another Saturninus and Sattius send greetings to their brothers Januarius, Saturninus, Maximus, Victor, another Victor, Cassius, Proculus, Modianus, Cittinus, Gargilius, Eutychianus, another Gargilius, another Saturninus, Nemesianus, Nampulus, Antonianus, Rogatianus and Honoratus.*¹

1.1 When we gathered together in Council, dearly beloved brethren, we read the letter² which you wrote concerning those who may appear to have received baptism among heretics and schismatics. You have inquired whether it is obligatory that when they come over to the Catholic Church (the Church being one only) they are to be baptized.

1.2 On this question we are aware that you follow there yourselves also the correct and constant rule of the Catholic Church:³

nevertheless, because in your charity for your brethren you have considered it fit that you should consult our counsel on the matter, we here present to you our judgment. It is, however, no novel judgment but one determined long ago by our predecessors⁴ and which we have followed; and in this judgment we are in harmonious agreement with you, being of the opinion and holding it as certain that no one can be baptized outside and away from the Church, on the grounds that there is only one baptism that has been appointed and that is in the holy Church. For we read in Scripture in the Lord's own words: *They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and they have dug out for themselves crumbling cisterns which are incapable of holding water.* Again we are warned by holy Scripture with these words: *Keep away from alien water; do not drink from an alien fountain.*⁵

1.3 Now if it is to be possible for water to clean away by its baptismal washing the sins of a man who is being baptized, then it is essential that that water should first be cleansed and sanctified by a bishop.⁶ For through the prophet Ezekiel the Lord says: *And I shall sprinkle over you clean water, and from all your uncleanness and from all your idolatry you will be cleansed. And I shall cleanse you, and give to you a new heart, and a new spirit I shall give within you.*

How, we ask, can a man possibly cleanse and sanctify water when he is himself unclean and when the Holy Spirit is not within him? Whereas the Lord says in the book of Numbers: *And everything which the unclean touches shall be unclean.*⁷ And how can a man who administers baptism possibly grant forgiveness of sins to another when he is himself unable to put aside his own sins, being outside the Church?

2.1 Moreover, the very questions put during baptism provide us with evidence of the truth. For when we say: "Do you believe in everlasting life and the forgiveness of sins through the holy Church," we mean that forgiveness of sins is granted only within the Church, whereas there is no forgiveness of sins among heretics, where there is no Church. Hence supporters of the heretics either should change the questions they put at baptism or else they should keep to the truth; unless, that is, they are prepared to go so far as to ascribe the Church also to those who, according to their contention, have the power to baptize.⁸

2.2 Likewise, a person who is baptized has also to be anointed

so that by receiving the chrism, or anointing, he may become the anointed of God and receive within him the grace of Christ.⁹ And, moreover, it is through the Eucharist that the oil with which the baptized are anointed is sanctified upon the altar.¹⁰ But someone who has had neither altar nor Church could not sanctify the material substance of oil.¹¹ It follows that neither can there be any spiritual anointing among heretics, since it is manifest that oil cannot possibly be sanctified and the Eucharist cannot be celebrated among them. We must recall and heed the words of Scripture: *Let not the oil of a sinner anoint my head.*¹² The Holy Spirit has here given us this advance warning in the Psalms, not wishing that any wanderer who might stray away from the path of truth should receive anointing among heretics and the enemies of Christ. 2.3 And, indeed, what solemn prayer can a sinful and sacrilegious bishop offer for the person he has baptized, remembering that it is written: *God hears not the sinner, but He does hear any man who worships Him and does this will?*¹³

Besides, can a man give what he does not have himself? How can a man who has himself lost the Holy Spirit perform actions of the spirit? That is why those who come uninitiated to the Church are to be baptized and renewed; within the Church they may accordingly be sanctified by men who are themselves holy, for it is written: *Be holy, for I, too, am holy, says the Lord.*¹⁴ Thus a man who has been seduced into error and bathed outside the Church is able to put aside in the authentic baptism of the Church even the blemish he has contracted when, desiring to approach God and seeking out a bishop, he was deceived by his error and fell instead into the hands of some sacrilegious minister.¹⁵

3.1 You must appreciate that if you acknowledge the claim that heretics and schismatics have actually baptized, you are giving approval to their baptism. And it is not possible for some part of their baptism to be void while another part of it is valid. If a man has power to baptize, he also has the power to confer the Holy Spirit; conversely, if he cannot confer the Holy Spirit (being outside the Church and therefore not with the Holy Spirit), neither can he baptize anyone who seeks baptism. There is but one baptism, and one Holy Spirit, and one Church founded by Christ our Lord upon Peter to be the source and ground of its oneness.¹⁶ 3.2 As, therefore, with such men everything is false and void, we may not give our approval to

anything which they have done. What action of theirs can stand ratified and confirmed in the eyes of the Lord when the Lord calls them His own foes and enemies, stating in His Gospel: *He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters?* And the blessed apostle John, that guardian of the commands and precepts of the Lord, likewise has stated in his epistle: *You have heard that the Antichrist is coming. But even today there are many antichrists. From that we can recognize that it is the end of time. They have forsaken us, but they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have remained with us.*¹⁷

3.3 It is our duty also to gather; it is our duty also to judge¹⁸ whether those who are enemies of the Lord and are called antichrists have the ability to confer the grace of Christ. But we are with the Lord; we uphold the unity of the Lord; through His bounteous favour we administer His priesthood within His Church. Accordingly it is our duty to reject, to repudiate, and to regard as impious any action of His enemies and of antichrists; and to those who, coming away from error and wickedness, acknowledge the true faith of the one and only Church, it is our duty to impart that faith and truth and unity by means of all the sacred ceremonies of divine grace.¹⁹

We wish that you, our dearly beloved brethren, may ever fare well.

LETTER 71

*Cyprian sends greetings to Quintus, his brother.*¹

1.1. Lucianus, our fellow presbyter, has reported to me,² dearly beloved brother, that you wish us to make known to you our view concerning those who might appear to have received baptism amongst heretics and schismatics.

A large number of our fellow bishops have met together recently in Council. I am sending you a copy of the document produced by this Council,³ so that you may be informed what we bishops along with our fellow presbyters who were in attendance have decreed upon this matter.⁴

1.2. I cannot begin to imagine what foolhardy supposition in-

duces some of our colleagues to think that there is no need for those who have been bathed among heretics⁵ to receive baptism when they come over to us—on the grounds that, so they contend, there is only one baptism. Of course there is only one baptism, but it is to be found within the Catholic Church, for the Church itself is one and there cannot be baptism outside of that Church. There cannot be two baptisms: hence, if heretics genuinely baptize, they must be the ones who have the power of baptism. Anyone who uses the weight of his authority to offer to heretics this sort of advocacy is capitulating to them; he is agreeing that an enemy and adversary of Christ would appear to have the power of cleansing, purifying, and sanctifying man.

1.3. But what we say is this: those who come from heresy are not being rebaptized with us, they are being baptized. They cannot receive anything there, where there is nothing; rather they come to us so that here they may receive, where all grace and truth belong (for grace and truth are one). Even so, some of our colleagues would rather give honour to heretics than agree with us; they refuse to baptize those who come to them, asserting the oneness of baptism. And yet by so doing they are themselves in effect creating two baptisms in that they affirm that baptism is also to be found amongst heretics. Or else—clearly the more grievous offence—they are doing their best to give precedence and superiority to the foul and unholy washing of heretics over the one and only, the true and lawful baptism of the Catholic Church. They fail to heed the words of Scripture: *If a man is baptized by one who is dead, what does his washing avail him?*⁶ Now it is evident that those who are not in the Church of Christ are reckoned among the dead and that one man cannot be given life by another man who himself does not have life; there is only the one Church which has obtained the grace of eternal life, and she not only has life herself for eternity but also gives life to God's people.

2.1. And what is more, they claim that in this they are following the custom of old,⁷ that is to say, the custom among the men of old when heresy and schism were still in their first beginnings. Accordingly, at that time those involved in heresy did come from those who were seeking to leave the Church but who had already been baptized in it. If they returned to the Church and did penance, there was no need to baptize them. 2.2. But this is the practice we observe our-

selves today. Consider the case of those who are known to have been baptized in the Church and then to have gone over from us to heresy. If they later recognize their sin, cast aside error, and return to truth and their loving mother,⁸ it is sufficient to lay hands upon them in penitence: they were once sheep and now the shepherd can welcome back into His fold the sheep who have been abducted and have strayed.⁹

2.3. If, on the other hand, a man comes to us from heresy who was not previously baptized in the Church but who is a total stranger and outsider, then he must be baptized in order to be made a sheep: there is but one water which can make sheep, and that is to be found in the holy Church. Falsehood and truth can have nothing in common, no more can darkness and light, mortality and immortality, antichrist and Christ. We must, therefore, in every way defend the oneness of the Catholic Church, we must at no point yield ground to the enemies of faith and truth.

3.1. And we should not lay down regulations simply from custom; we should convince by reason.

Consider Peter, whom the Lord chose first and upon whom He built His Church.¹⁰ When Paul was later in dispute with him over the question of circumcision, not even he showed any arrogant pretensions or made any special claims for himself. He did not assert that he had the rights of seniority¹¹ and that therefore upstarts and late-comers ought rather to be obedient to him. He did not look down upon Paul as having once been a persecutor of the Church. No. He welcomed any counsel that brought the truth and he readily agreed to the just reasons advanced by Paul. He has thus given us an object lesson in harmony and forbearance, showing that we must not stubbornly cling to our own ideas; rather we should adopt as our own any beneficial and salutary suggestions that are from time to time made by our brethren and colleagues, provided that they conform to truth and justice.

3.2 Paul also had this in view, as well as a loyal concern for peace and harmony, when he declared in his epistle: *Let two or three speak in prophecy while the rest weigh what they say. If revelation comes to another who is seated, then let the first speaker be silent.*¹²

Here he has taught and shown to us that there are many matters on which revelation may come to particular individuals, bringing im-

provement, and that no man ought stubbornly to do battle in defence of an opinion he once acquired and has long held; rather he should eagerly embrace another viewpoint if it is an improvement and of greater benefit. For when we are offered improved counsel, we are not being defeated, we are being instructed. This is especially true when it is a question of those matters that concern the unity of the Church and the truth of our faith and hope.

Consequently, as bishops of God who through His grace are the appointed leaders of His Church, we should be convinced that forgiveness of sins can be granted only in the Church and that the enemies of Christ cannot lay any sort of claim to a share in His grace.¹³

4.1. This is certainly the conclusion also reached by Agrippinus of happy memory in company with the rest of his fellow bishops who were at the time governing the Church of the Lord in the provinces of Africa and Numidia.¹⁴ He came to this determination after they had weighed and examined the matter in Council together. And this judgment of theirs, so just and holy, so salutary to faith and conformable to the Catholic Church, we have likewise followed.

4.2. In our fraternal love we wish to apprise you of a letter we have written on this subject, and we are sending across to you a copy of this letter.¹⁵ This is not only for your information but for the information of our fellow bishops who are also over there.

I wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well.

LETTER 72

*Cyprian and others send greetings to their brother Stephen.*¹

1.1 In order to settle certain matters by weighing and examining them carefully in common counsel, we considered it necessary, dearly beloved brother, to summon and convene a Council,² at which a large number of bishops assembled together. At this Council many matters of business were raised and transacted.³ But there was one item in particular that we thought it proper to write to you about and draw it to the attention of your sage and weighty counsel,⁴ for it bears closely upon the question of episcopal authority and the unity as well

as the dignity of the Catholic Church as laid down and instituted by God.⁵ It is this: that in the case of those who have been bathed⁶ beyond and outside the Church and have thus become stained and polluted by the unholy water of heretics and schismatics, when they come to us and the Church (which is one), they must be baptized. And the reason is that it is not sufficient just to lay hands upon them for receiving the Holy Spirit,⁷ unless they also receive the baptism of the Church. 1.2 It is written: *Unless a man has been born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.* Hence, it is only if they are born of both sacred rites that they can be fully sanctified and can therefore become sons of God.⁸ Thus we find in the Acts of the Apostles that the apostles kept and observed this rule, adhering to the truth of our saving faith. We read that in the house of the centurion Cornelius there were present Gentiles, burning with ardent faith and believing in the Lord with all their hearts; when the Holy Spirit descended upon them, so that being filled with the Spirit they began to bless God in divers tongues, the blessed apostle Peter, being mindful of the Lord's precept and the Gospel, nevertheless bade that even they should be baptized, though they had already been filled with the Holy Spirit. He wanted it seen that nothing should be omitted: the teaching of the apostles should in every particular conform to the law enjoined by the Lord and the Gospel.⁹

1.3 What heretics use is not baptism; amongst those who are adversaries of Christ there is no action which can bring profit through His grace. All this has been carefully explained in a recent letter written on that subject to Quintus, our colleague in Mauretania, as likewise in a letter which our colleagues earlier directed to their fellow bishops presiding in Numidia. I am appending a copy of both these letters.¹⁰

2.1 Moreover, dearly beloved brother, we specifically add a further point which met with our common agreement and approval.

There may be presbyters or deacons, previously appointed to their clerical office in the Catholic Church, who have subsequently turned traitor and have risen in rebellion against the Church; or there may be others who have been advanced from within the ranks of heretics to clerical office through an unholy ordination at the hands of false bishops and antichrists, contrary to the institution of Christ, and who have then attempted to offer up false and sacrilegious sacrifices

outside the Church in opposition to the one, divine altar.¹¹ In either of these cases, when they return they are to be received on the following terms: they may join our communion, but as laymen; they are to remain satisfied that they are admitted to peace at all, seeing that they have proved to be enemies of peace; but on no account are they to retain amongst us on their return those same weapons of clerical rank and dignity which they used in their rebellion against us.¹²

2.2 For it is essential that bishops and clergy, waiting as they do upon the sacrifices of the altar, should be men who are sound and without blemish. As the Lord God says in these words of Leviticus: *No man in whom there has been defilement or blemish shall approach to offer gifts to God.* In Exodus He makes this same bidding in these words: *Let the priests who approach the Lord God keep themselves holy lest perchance the Lord should forsake them.* And again: *They who approach to minister at the altar of the Holy One shall not bring sin upon themselves lest they should die.*¹³

What greater sin can there be, what blemish can be more disfiguring, than to have rebelled against Christ, to have scattered His Church which He bought and established with His own blood, to have been heedless of the peace and charity of the gospel, going into battle with all the fury of enmity and discord against the people of God who are of one heart and one accord?

2.3 And even if they do subsequently return to the Church themselves, they still cannot restore and bring back with them those who were led astray by them and were then overtaken by death outside the Church; there they perished, deprived of peace and communion within the Church. On the day of judgment their souls will be sought at their hands, for they were the authors and leaders of their perdition. That is why it is sufficient if pardon is granted to them on their return: in the household of faith infidelity ought to be given no advancement. What do we leave for the good and the innocent who never abandon the Church, if we give honours to those who abandoned us and rebelled against the Church?

3.1 We bring these points to your notice, dearly beloved brother, in a spirit of mutual respect and sincere affection. We believe that matters which conform to piety and truth will recommend themselves to you also, knowing as we do your true piety and faith.¹⁴

However, we are aware that there are some who refuse to lay

aside notions acquired in the past and do not readily change their viewpoint;¹⁵ they keep as their own certain practices adopted amongst them in the past but without, however, rupturing the bonds of peace and harmony with their colleagues. 3.2 We are not forcing anyone in this matter; we are laying down no law. For every appointed leader has in his government of the Church the freedom to exercise his own will and judgment, while having one day to render an account of his conduct to the Lord.¹⁶

We wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well.

LETTER 73

Cyprian sends greetings to Iubaianus, his brother.¹

1.1 You have written to me, dearly beloved brother, asking that I indicate to you our mind and thoughts on the subject of heretical baptism—baptism by persons who, while outside the Church and beyond her communion, still lay claim to something which is neither within their rights nor within their power. Such baptism we cannot regard as either valid or legitimate; beyond question, they do not lawfully possess it.

We have already described the views we hold on this subject in letters of ours. And so, to save time, I am sending to you a copy of these letters. They show what we determined in a Council which a large number of us attended; and also what I afterwards wrote in reply to our colleague Quintus who had inquired on the same question.² 1.2 And now, also, when we assembled together from the provinces of Africa and Numidia—seventy-one bishops all told—we once again affirmed by our resolution this same view.³ We ruled that there is but one baptism and that is established within the Catholic Church; by this baptism we do not rebaptize but rather *baptize* all those who, coming as they do from spurious and unhallowed waters, need to be washed clean and sanctified in the genuine waters of salvation.

2.1 And, dearly beloved brother, we are not disturbed by the observation which you included in your letter: you pointed out that

followers of Novatian rebaptize those whom they entice away from us.⁴ But what the enemies of the Church get up to is absolutely of no concern to us; what we must do ourselves is to uphold the honour and powers that belong to us and steadfastly abide by reason and truth.⁵ Novatian is behaving as apes do: they try to mimic human actions, though they are not humans themselves. Thus Novatian is wanting to claim for himself the authority and truth of the Catholic Church, though he is himself not in the Church, or to put it much more accurately, though he has proved to be in fact a rebel and an enemy against the Church. He knows perfectly well that there is only the one baptism. Hence, he is laying claim to this one baptism for himself, so that he can say that the Church is with him, and he can turn us into heretics.

2.2 But we in fact hold in *our* possession the one Church in all its entirety.⁶ And we know as a certainty and we have complete assurance that, being outside the Church, he has power to do nothing and that baptism—and there is only the one—is with us; after all, even he was originally baptized amongst us when he still abided by the true principle of unity which God has ordained.⁷

Now if Novatian supposes that those who have been baptized inside the Church need to be rebaptized when they are away outside the Church, then he ought to have started with himself: he should have been the first to be rebaptized with his alien and heretical baptism, seeing that he holds the view that after the Church, or rather in opposition to the Church, others need to be rebaptized when they are outside the Church.

2.3 And, besides, why should we conclude that we are to avoid doing this just because Novatian has the presumption to do it also? What sort of argument is that? Ought we to renounce our episcopal chair just because Novatian tries to usurp the honour of a bishop's chair also? Must we withdraw from the sacrifices of the altar just because Novatian attempts to set up an altar and to offer sacrifices, when he has no right to do so? Do we have to avoid appearing to celebrate rites that resemble or are similar to his? It would be utterly foolish and ridiculous for the Church to abandon the truth simply because Novatian, outside the Church, claims for himself a mere shadow of that truth.

3.1 For our part, moreover, it is no novelty nor on a sudden im-

pulse that we judge it necessary that those who come to the Church from heresy should be baptized. For many long years have now elapsed since the time of Agrippinus of happy memory, under whom a great many bishops assembled together and decided upon this ruling.⁸ Ever since that time, until today, many thousands of heretics in our provinces upon their conversion to the Church have neither disdained nor delayed⁹ acquiring the grace that comes with the bath of life and the baptism of salvation; rather they have welcomed the occasion with eagerness and understanding. 3.2 And catechists¹⁰ encounter no difficulty in imparting what is lawful and true to those who have already rejected the wickedness of heresy and discovered the truth of the Church; they come to us that they may learn, and they learn that they may have life. Let us not astound such heretics by granting them our acquiescence and advocacy when in fact they are ready and eager to obey the truth.¹¹

4.1 In the letter of which you sent me a copy¹² I did find it written that there is no need to inquire who administered baptism, since the person baptized can have received forgiveness of sins according to his faith. Here I certainly consider it my duty not to let this passage go without comment, especially as I observe that mention is made of Marcion as well in this same letter; it claims that not even those who come from him ought to be baptized, on the grounds that they would appear to have been baptized already in the name of Jesus Christ.¹³

4.2 According to this argument, we have to consider the faith of believers outside the Church and see whether they might obtain grace in some measure according to that faith of theirs. For if we and heretics have one and the same faith, then we can also have one and the same grace. And if they confess the same Father with us, the same Son, the same Holy Spirit, and the same Church—whether they be Patripassians, Anthropians, Valentinians, Apelletians, Ophites, Marcionites,¹⁴ and all the other heresies which plague and poison the truth, which seek to slay and destroy it—then they may also have the one baptism, seeing that they have the one faith as well.¹⁵

5.1 It would be tedious to run through the entire catalogue of heresies and to review their individual absurdities and idiocies; and besides, there is no pleasure in recounting what only causes disgust or embarrassment to know. And so, for the present, let us inquire into the case of Marcion only, mention of whom was made in the

letter which you passed on to us. Let us examine whether it is possible that his baptism is sound in principle.

5.2 When the Lord was sending forth His disciples after His resurrection, He taught them how they were to baptize, instructing them with these words: *All power is given me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*¹⁶ There He makes known to them the Trinity in Whose sacred name the nations were to be baptized.¹⁷ But surely Marcion does not hold this Trinity? Surely he does not confess the same God the Father and Creator as we do? Does he recognize the same Christ His Son, born of the Virgin Mary, the Word which was made flesh, who bore our sins, who by dying overcame death, who initiated the resurrection of the flesh, beginning with His own person, and who revealed to His disciples that He had risen again in the same flesh?¹⁸

5.3 But Marcion's faith is far different, as is that found among all the other heresies. Or, one could more accurately say that among them is to be found nothing but unbelief and blasphemy and belligerence, all of which are enemies of sound doctrine and truth. How, then, is it possible that somebody who is baptized amongst them may be supposed to have obtained forgiveness of sins and the grace of God's mercy by means of his faith, while he does not hold the true Faith? But if, as some suppose, a man is able to receive something when he is away from and outside the Church in accordance with his faith, then most certainly he receives according to what he believes. His beliefs are false, so he cannot receive what is true; instead, he receives what is spurious and godless—just like his beliefs.

6.1 This question of a godless and spurious baptism is touched upon in passing by Jeremiah the prophet when he says: *Why are they who afflict me all powerful? My wound is stubborn; how shall I be healed? When it was made, it became to me as lying water without faith.*¹⁹ Here, through the prophet, the Holy Spirit mentions lying water which is without faith. What else can this lying and faithless water be but that water which assumes the lying resemblance of baptism and thwarts the grace of faith by its shadowy imitation? 6.2 And if someone is able to receive baptism and to obtain forgiveness of sins according to his perverted faith, then he can obtain the Holy Spirit as well by virtue of that same faith. In that case, when he comes to us, there is no

need for hands to be laid upon him so that he may receive the Spirit and be sealed.²⁰ Either he can obtain both outside through his faith or, being outside, he receives neither of them.

7.1 But it is perfectly obvious where, in fact, and through whose agency forgiveness of sins can be granted, which is certainly granted in baptism. For Peter is the one upon whom the Lord built the Church, establishing him visibly to be the source of its unity; and it was to Peter in the first place that the Lord gave the power to loose whatever he loosed.

7.2 And after the resurrection He spoke to the apostles as well, using these words: *As the Father has sent me, so I send you. When He had said this, He breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive, they will be forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they will be retained.*²¹ From all this we perceive that only those leaders who are set in authority within the Church and have been established in accordance with the law of the gospel and the institution of the Lord have the lawful power to baptize and to grant forgiveness of sins; outside the Church there can be neither binding nor loosing, for there is nobody who has the power either to bind or to loose.

8.1 And it is not without the authority of divine Scripture, dearly beloved brother, that we put forward this argument. We claim that all things have been divinely ordered according to a definite law and particular ordinance: no one, therefore, can simply usurp for himself, in opposition to the bishops and priests, something which is not within his right or power. Hence, Core, Dathan, and Abiron tried to usurp for themselves, in opposition to Moses and Aaron the priest, the privilege of offering sacrifice, but their reckless and unlawful attempt did not go unpunished. 8.2 So also the sons of Aaron, who placed alien fire upon the altar, perished forthwith before the eyes of their wrathful Lord.²² That same punishment awaits those who bring alien water to their false baptism. God in His strict justice will exact punishment and vengeance upon heretics who, in opposition to the Church, do what is lawful for the Church and the Church alone to do.

9.1 Now some raise in objection the case of those who were baptized in Samaria. They claim that when the apostles Peter and John came, only hands were laid upon them so that they might receive the Holy Spirit; they were not rebaptized.²³

In our view, dearly beloved brother, this passage is entirely irrelevant to the present situation. For the Samaritan believers believed with true faith and they had already been baptized by Philip the deacon, whom these very same apostles had sent forth, and they had been baptized inside and within the one Church to which alone has been granted the power to bestow the grace of baptism and to loose sins. Consequently, there was no further need of baptism for those who had received the lawful baptism of the Church. Peter and John made good only what they lacked: after prayers had been said for them and hands were laid upon them, the Holy Spirit was invoked and poured out upon them.

9.2 And this same practice we observe today ourselves: those who are baptized in the Church are presented to the appointed leaders of the Church, and by our prayer and the imposition of our hands they receive the Holy Spirit and are made perfect with the Lord's seal.²⁴

10.1 We conclude, dearly beloved brother, that there is no need for us to suppose we have to surrender ground to heretics and betray to them that baptism which was given to the one Church and to that Church alone. It is the duty of a good soldier to defend the camp of his commander against enemies and rebels; it is the duty of an illustrious general to guard the standards entrusted to his safekeeping.

As Scripture has it: *The Lord your God is a jealous God.* 10.2 We have received the Spirit of God; we ought, therefore, to have jealous concern for the faith of God. By such jealous concern Phineas pleased God and earned His favour; he allayed His wrath and outrage by which the people were perishing.²⁵ Why give recognition to what is fraudulent and foreign and hostile to divinely-ordained unity, seeing that we acknowledge only one Christ and His one and only Church?

10.3 The Church is like Paradise: within her walls she encloses on the inside fruit-bearing trees.²⁶ Of those trees any which do not produce good fruit are cut out and cast onto the fire.²⁷ And those trees she waters by means of four rivers—that is, by the four Gospels;²⁸ by them she generously spreads in a saving and heavenly flood the graces of baptism. Is it possible for anyone who is not on the inside within the Church to water another, drawing from these springs of the Church? Can he give to another the health-giving and saving draughts of Paradise when he stands himself self-condemned in his

wickedness,"⁴⁹ when he has been banished beyond the springs of Paradise and is dry and parched, faint with a never-ending thirst?

11.1 The Lord proclaims that whoever is thirsty should come and drink from the rivers of living water which flowed from out of His belly.⁵⁰ And where are the thirsty to go? To heretics, where there is no spring, no stream of life-giving water? Or to the Church, which is one and which was founded by the word of the Lord upon one man, who also received its keys? It is she alone who holds in her possession the whole of the power of her Spouse and Lord. 11.2 And it is in this Church that we preside. In defence of her honour and unity we fight, her grace as well as her glory we defend with faithful devotion. We are the ones who, by divine privilege, water the thirsty people of God, we are the ones who guard the boundaries of her life-giving springs. If we uphold our rights to their possession, if we acknowledge the sacrament of unity,⁵¹ why become perverters of the truth and betrayers of that unity? The water of the Church is faithful, saving, and holy; it cannot be defiled and polluted, just as the Church herself is undefiled, chaste, and pure. 11.3 But if heretics are devoted to the Church and are to be found within the Church, then they can make use of her baptism and all her other saving blessings. If, on the other hand, they are not within the Church—or rather, if they act in opposition to the Church—how can they baptize with the Church's baptism?

12.1 And it is no small or trivial matter which is conceded to heretics should we recognize their baptism, for from baptism the whole of faith takes its rise and origin, by baptism we take our first saving steps towards hope of eternal life, in baptism God in His loving-kindness purifies and gives life to His servants. 12.2 And so, if someone could be baptized amongst heretics, he could doubtless also receive forgiveness of sins, and if he received forgiveness of sins, he was sanctified. If he was sanctified, then he became a temple of God. But of what God, I ask?⁵² The Creator? Not possible, seeing that he does not believe in Him. Christ, then? But he cannot become His temple either, for he denies that Christ is God. Or the Holy Spirit? As these three are one,⁵³ how can the Holy Spirit look with favour upon him when he is an enemy either of the Son or of the Father?

13.1 Some people try to confront us with custom as an objection

when they find themselves being thus defeated by reason. They attempt this as if custom were superior to truth, as if in spiritual matters there were no obligation to follow whatever improvement the Holy Spirit may have revealed.³⁴ But their attempt is of no avail.

If somebody wanders in honest error, then he can certainly be pardoned, just as the blessed apostle Paul says of himself: *I was at first a blasphemer, a persecutor, a wrongdoer, but because I acted in ignorance I obtained mercy.*³⁵ 13.2 But a man who wittingly and knowingly persists in his former error even after revelation and inspiration have been given, sins without the pardon granted to ignorance. For it is only through prejudice and obstinacy that he can continue on with his resistance now that he is overcome by reason. 13.3 And it is no use anyone raising the defence: "we are following what we have received from the apostles."³⁶ For the apostles have handed down one Church only, and one baptism which is to be found only within that same Church; nor can we discover one example of a person, originally baptized among heretics, who was afterwards received into the Church and admitted to communion by the apostles in virtue of that baptism. The apostles, we conclude, do not appear to have sanctioned the baptism of heretics.

14.1 Some also repeat the words of the apostle Paul as if they were relevant support for heretics: *Nevertheless, in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, let Christ be proclaimed.*³⁷ But in these words, too, we can find nothing that can assist the advocacy of those who are supporters and partisans of heretics. 14.2 In this epistle of his, Paul was not speaking of heretics nor of the baptism of heretics; it cannot be shown that his remarks are in any way relevant to that topic. He was, as a matter of fact, speaking about *brethren* who either were going about in disorderly fashion, contrary to the discipline of the Church, or who, on the other hand, were observing the truth of the gospel in the fear of God. Of these, he stated, some spoke the word of the Lord with fearless and steadfast courage, while others spent their time in quarreling and jealousy; towards him some had maintained charity and good will whilst others continued with their quarreling and ill will. Nevertheless, he said, he bore all these things patiently, so long as the name of Christ, which he preached himself, might come, whether in truth or in pretence, to the knowledge of

many and there might be through this preaching of theirs increase in the sowing of the Word, all new and unpractised though that sowing might still be.

14.3 Besides, it is one thing for those who are on the inside, within the Church, to speak of the name of Christ; it is quite another matter for those who are on the outside and who work in opposition to the Church to baptize in the name of Christ.³⁸ Accordingly, in the case of those who espouse the cause of heretics, there is no point in their producing this statement of Paul's, which concerned his *brethren*; rather, they need to demonstrate whether Paul thought it right to make any concession to the heretic, whether he approved of their faith and baptism, whether he ruled that unbelievers and blasphemers could receive forgiveness of sins outside of the Church.

15.1 And furthermore, if we look at what the apostles thought about heretics, we shall find that in all their epistles they execrate and revile their sacrilegious perversion. Thus, they say of their words that they spread like a gangrene; how, then, are such words able to give forgiveness of sins when they spread, like a gangrene, to the ears of those who hear them? Again, they say that there can be no partnership between justice and iniquity, no communion between light and darkness; how, then, is darkness able to enlighten, iniquity to justify? Or they say that they are not from God but from the spirit of Antichrist; how, then, can they do the works of the Spirit and of God when they are not only enemies of God but their hearts are in the possession of the spirit of Antichrist?³⁹ 15.2 We have only to cast aside the errors of human disputations and with sincere and devout faith return to the authority of the gospel and the teaching handed down by the apostles, and we realize that those who scatter and assail the Church of Christ cannot possibly have access to the saving grace of the Church; they are called His adversaries by Christ Himself, antichrists by His apostles.

16.1 Here some try to bring forward the name of Christ as an objection against us, but without good reason. They do so in the hopes that they might subvert the truth of Christ, saying: Those baptized in the name of Christ, no matter where nor how, have obtained the grace of baptism.⁴⁰ Yet Christ Himself uses these words: *Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven. And again, He forewarns and instructs us not to be too easily deceived by*

false prophets and false christs who use His name: 16.2 *There are many*, He says, *who shall come in my name, saying: I am Christ, and they shall deceive many*. And later He added: *But you should be on your guard, and realize I have foretold you all things*.⁴¹ It clearly follows that we are not at once to welcome and admit whatever they boastfully claim to do in the name of Christ but only whatever is actually done in the truth of Christ.

17.1 Now, in the Gospels and the epistles of the apostles, the name of Jesus is certainly mentioned in connexion with the forgiveness of sins. But that is not to say that the Son, by Himself, without the Father, or indeed in opposition to the Father, can be of avail to anyone. His name is mentioned, however, to bring home to the Jews, who kept boastfully claiming they had the Father, that the Father would be of no avail to them unless they believed in the Son whom He had sent (or, to put it another way, those who knew God the Father, the Creator, must also know Christ, the Son); they were to stop feeling satisfied and pleased with themselves about knowing the Father alone without recognizing His Son, whereas the Son in fact repeatedly said: *No one comes to the Father except through me*. Indeed, He Himself makes it clear that it is only the knowledge of both which leads to salvation, by these words: *This is eternal life, that they should know you, the one, true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent*. From this statement and declaration that comes from Christ's own lips we find that the Father, who sent, is first of all to be known, and then Christ, who was sent, and that there can be no hope of salvation unless both are known together.

How is it possible, then, that those who are alleged to have been baptized amongst heretics in the name of Christ are reckoned to have obtained forgiveness of sins when amongst them God the Father is not merely not known, He is actually blasphemed?⁴²

17.2 Moreover, the case of the Jews in the time of the apostles was altogether different from the situation of the Gentiles. The former had already received the most ancient baptism of the Law and of Moses; they needed, therefore, to be baptized, in addition, in the name of Jesus Christ. We can see this in the Acts of the Apostles, in the words Peter addressed to them: *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord for the forgiveness of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your*

*children and to all who come thereafter, whomsoever the Lord has called.*⁴³ Here Peter mentions Jesus Christ, not that the Father should be omitted but so that to the Father should be added the Son. 18.1 On the other hand, after the resurrection, when the Lord was sending the apostles to the Gentiles, He bade that they should baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁴ How, then, do some people claim that a Gentile can obtain forgiveness of sins if he is baptized outside and beyond the Church, even in opposition to the Church, no matter where nor how, so long as it is in the name of Jesus Christ? Whereas it is Christ Himself who bids that the Gentiles are to be baptized in the full and united Trinity.

18.2 Is it credible that while the person who denies Christ is indeed denied by Christ, yet the person who denies His Father, whom Christ Himself confessed, is not denied; and that the person who blasphemes against one whom Christ called His Lord and God is rewarded by Christ and obtains forgiveness of sins and the sanctification of baptism? And by what power, might I ask, is anyone who denies that God is the Creator of Christ⁴⁵ able to obtain in baptism forgiveness of sins? Bear in mind that the very power by which we are baptized and sanctified Christ received from that same Father, whom He called greater than Himself, by whom He sought to be glorified, and whose will He obeyed and accomplished even to drinking the cup and submitting to death.⁴⁶

18.3 Manifestly, you must become yourself a partner in the blasphemies of heretics if you wish to maintain and assert that anyone who gravely blasphemes and sins against the Father, the Lord and God of Christ, can receive forgiveness of sins in the name of Christ. Furthermore, how can it be that whereas the person who denies the Son does not have the Father as well, yet the person who denies the Father is considered to have the Son? And this despite the explicit testimony of the Son Himself: *No one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by the Father.* It plainly follows that no forgiveness of sins can be received in baptism from the Son which it is clear the Father has not granted. This is doubly so in the light of a further remark, made in similar vein, by that same Son: *Every planting which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted out.*⁴⁷

19.1 And if the disciples of Christ refuse to learn from Christ Himself the profound reverence and veneration due to the name of

the Father, let them at least learn this lesson from worldly and earthly examples and at the same time realize that Christ intended the following words to be the gravest of reproaches: *The children of this world are wiser than the children of light.*⁴⁸ Now if in this world someone insults another's father, if he tears the father's honour and good name to shreds with outrageous abuse from his slanderous tongue, then the son becomes angry and indignant; he strives by whatever means he can to avenge the insult and injury done to his father. Can you, then, imagine that Christ offers impunity to the impious and sacrilegious blasphemers of His own Father, can you believe He forgives in baptism the sins of those who after baptism will clearly continue to heap the same abuse upon the person of the Father and who will go on incessantly committing with their wicked tongues sins of blasphemy? Is it possible for a follower of Christ and a servant of God to conceive of such a notion, to give it credence and belief, and to give voice to it in words?

19.2 What will become, then, of the holy commandments of the law which say: *Honour your father and mother?* I presume, of course, the name of father, which in man we are bidden to honour, may in the case of God be violated with impunity! And what will happen to the words which Christ Himself proclaimed in the Gospel: *Whoever curses his father or mother shall be punished with death?*⁴⁹ I presume, of course, that the very Person who commands that cursing one's parents according to the flesh is to be punished with death, Himself gives life to those who curse their heavenly and spiritual Father and who are enemies of their mother, the Church!

19.3 Here there are some who make a vile and utterly abominable allegation: they maintain that the very same Person who threatens that all blasphemers against the Holy Spirit shall be guilty of eternal sin⁵⁰ also sanctifies with His saving baptism blasphemers against God the Father. And they actually judge that they ought to admit to communion without baptism men like that when they come to the Church, not considering that thus they come into communion with other men's sins—and eternal sins, at that. For they are letting in without baptism men who are not able to cast off their sins of blasphemy except by baptism.

20.1 It is not only absurd, it is indeed perverse, that whereas heretics themselves, after repudiating and abandoning their former

error or wickedness, acknowledge the truth of the Church, we should be the ones to mutilate the rights and sacraments of that very same truth, telling them when they come to us in penitence that they have already received forgiveness of sins—and yet they confess that they have sinned and that is why they come, in order to gain pardon from the Church.

20.2 In the face of that, dearly beloved brother, our duty is clear: we must hold fast to the faith and truth of the Catholic Church, we must continue to teach it, and by means of all the commandments of the Gospels and the apostles we must set forth the nature of the order and unity ordained by God.

21.1 Can the power of baptism, I ask, be greater or stronger than the confession and suffering of a man who confesses Christ before men and is baptized in his own blood? Yet, not even this sort of baptism can benefit the heretic who, though he has confessed Christ, is put to death outside the Church. Otherwise one would have to suppose that the supporters and spokesmen of the heretics successfully proclaim them martyrs when they are killed for a confession of Christ that is false, and that they assign to them the crown and glory for a martyr's sufferings despite the explicit testimony of the Apostle that even if they are burnt and put to death it will profit them nothing.⁵¹

21.2 If, then, not even the baptism of blood and of public confession will profit the heretic for salvation—for there is no salvation outside the Church—how much more must this be so if in some lair, in some den of thieves, a man is bathed in polluted and spurious water,⁵² and so far from putting off his old sins, he loads himself with yet more fresh and graver ones.

21.3 Baptism, we conclude, cannot be common to us and to heretics, for we have in common with them neither God the Father nor Christ the Son nor the Holy Spirit nor faith nor Church itself. It is essential, therefore, that when they come from heresy to the Church, they should be baptized; if they are to be made ready for the kingdom of God by divine regeneration in the one, genuine, and lawful baptism of the holy Church, they must be born of both sacraments. As it is written: *Unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*⁵³

22.1 Some people confront us with the following objection based on this passage, acting as if they could, by means of human

argument, make void the truth of the gospel message. In the case of a catechumen,⁵⁴ they ask, if he should be seized and put to death for confession of the Name before he is baptized in the Church, does he then lose the hope of salvation and the reward of confession simply because he had not yet been born again of water?

22.2 In reply we say: let them realize, these champions and promoters of heretics, two things. In the first place, such catechumens do hold the faith and truth of the Church complete, they march forth from the camp of God to do battle with the devil possessed of a full and sincere knowledge of God the Father and of Christ and the Holy Spirit; and in the second place, they are not in fact deprived of the sacrament of baptism, inasmuch as they are baptized with the greatest and most glorious baptism of all, that of blood. It was of this that the Lord Himself said that He had another baptism with which to be baptized. And the Lord further declared in the Gospel that those baptized in their own blood and sanctified with a martyr's suffering are made perfect and obtain the grace which God has promised; for when, in the midst of His own sufferings, He spoke to the thief who believed and confessed, He promised that he would be with Him in paradise.⁵⁵

22.3 Consequently, we who preside over the faith and truth must not deceive or mislead those who come to the faith and truth and who do penance, begging that their sins be forgiven. Rather, we must correct them and reform them and educate them in the teachings of heaven for entering the kingdom of heaven.

23.1 But it may be objected: "What, then, will become of those who in time past came from heresy to the Church and were admitted without baptism?" The Lord in His mercy has power to grant pardon and not separate from the blessings of His Church those who in all innocence were admitted into the Church and have fallen asleep in the Church.⁵⁶ 23.2 All the same, it does not follow that because error has been committed at one time, one should go on committing error for ever. It befits wise and God-fearing men to obey the truth eagerly and unhesitatingly when it is disclosed and opened out to them; they should not stubbornly persist in their resistance, opposing brethren and bishops on behalf of heretics.

24.1 Nor should anyone believe that heretics are being discouraged from coming to the Church because they find themselves faced

with this obstacle of baptism and stumble at it, as if a second baptism were being talked of. 24.2 As a matter of fact, when the truth is revealed to them and they are convinced of it, they are driven on all the more by the urgent need to come to us. But if they see it decreed and laid down by our judgment and decision that the baptism which they receive in heresy is to be reckoned proper and legitimate, then they will suppose that they properly and legitimately possess the Church as well, and all the other privileges of the Church. They will conclude that there is no need for them to come to us in that, having baptism, they would appear to have everything else also. 24.3. When, however, they realize that there can be no baptism outside the Church nor can there be forgiveness of sins granted outside, they come rushing to us all the more keenly and promptly, begging for the gifts and privileges of their mother, the Church, in the certain knowledge that by no other way can they come to possess the true grace which God has promised unless they come first to the true Church. And heretics will not refuse to be baptized with us in the true and legitimate baptism of the Church after they learn from us that those who had already been baptized with the baptism of John were also baptized by Paul, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles.⁵⁷

25.1 But as things are, some of our own brethren champion the cause of heretical baptism: recoiling in horror at the thought of re-baptizing, they consider it unlawful to baptize after God's enemies have already done so. Yet we do find that those whom John had baptized were afterwards baptized. And John was reckoned greater than all the prophets; he was filled with divine grace while still in his mother's womb; he was supported by the spirit and power of Elijah;⁵⁸ so far from being an adversary of the Lord, he was His herald and precursor; he proclaimed the coming of the Lord not in words only, he revealed Him to men's eyes; and he baptized the very Christ through whom all other men are baptized. 25.2 And if it is argued that a heretic can acquire the rights to baptism by being the first to baptize, baptism in that case will belong not to its rightful possessor but to those who seize it. Furthermore, as it is quite impossible for baptism and Church to be detached and separated from each other, the person able to seize hold of baptism first, will also have seized hold of the Church at the same time. And then to such a person you start appearing to be the heretic, being anticipated and coming along only

later. Therefore, if you give in and surrender, you have abandoned the rights you had once received. And the Holy Scriptures make plain to us what peril there is in affairs of God if you surrender your rights and power: in Genesis Esau lost in that way his birthright and was unable later to recover what he had once surrendered.⁵⁹

26.1 We have written this brief reply to you, dearly beloved brother, to the best of our poor ability, without, however, laying down prescriptions to anyone nor condemning anyone beforehand; we do not wish to prevent any bishop from doing what he thinks right, for he is free to exercise his own discretion. 26.2 But, for our own part, we do our very best to refrain from quarreling over this question of heretics with our colleagues and fellow bishops; we keep with them the harmony God has ordained and the peace the Lord has given us, remembering especially the words of the Apostle: *Should anyone have a mind to quarrel, we have no such custom, neither does the Church of God.* Charity of spirit, the honour of our episcopal college, the bond of faith, the harmony of the episcopate, these we preserve in patience and gentleness.⁶⁰

All this has prompted us recently to compose a treatise entitled *On the Virtue of Patience*; this we have done to the best of our humble talents, the Lord vouchsafing us leave and inspiration.⁶¹ We are now sending this to you as a token of our mutual affection.

I wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well.

LETTER 74

*Cyprian sends greetings to his brother Pompeius.*¹

1.1 We have covered fully, dearly beloved brother, in the letters of which we have sent you copies, all that needs to be said on the question of baptizing heretics.² However, since you have desired to be informed what our brother Stephen has written to me in reply to our letter,³ I am sending you now a copy of his answer.

When you read it you will mark with all the greater clarity the error of his thinking,⁴ endeavouring as he does to champion the cause

of heretics in opposition to the followers of Christ and the Church of God.

1.2 There is much that is arrogant, irrelevant, self-contradictory, ill-considered, and inept in what he has written; but he has even gone so far as to add this remark: "And so, in the case of those who may come to you from any heresy whatsoever, let there be no innovation beyond what has been handed down:⁵ hands are to be laid on them in penitence,⁶ since amongst heretics themselves they do not use their own rite of baptism on other heretics when they come to them,⁷ but they simply admit them to communion."

2.1 He has forbidden that anyone who comes from any heresy whatsoever should be baptized in the Church.

In other words, the judgment he has passed is that the baptisms of all heresies are valid and lawful. And whereas each particular heresy has its own particular brand of baptism and distinct sins of its own, he admits into his communion the baptism of them all; it follows that he has piled together and heaped upon his own head the iniquities of them all as well.⁸

2.2 And he has bidden that there is to be no innovation beyond what has been handed down.

It's as if to say that he is an innovator who upholds the oneness of the Church and stoutly defends the claims of that one Church to the one baptism! Clearly the innovator is rather the person who forgets all about the oneness of the Church and claims as his own all the falsehoods and defilements of their profane washing.

Let there be no innovation, he says, beyond what has been handed down.

From what source has that tradition of his been handed down? Does it come down to us from the authority of the Lord and the Gospel, or does it reach us from the precepts and epistles of the apostles?

2.3 Now God warns us on His own testimony that whatever has been written down has to be done, through the words He speaks to Jesus the son of Nun: *Let not the book that contains this law leave your lips; you are to meditate upon it day and night, so that you may observe in your actions everything that has been written in it.* Likewise, too, when the Lord was sending forth His apostles, He instructed that the nations were to be baptized and taught to observe everything that He had commanded.⁹

If, therefore, it is either commanded in the Gospel or if it is included in the epistles or the Acts of the apostles that those who come from any heresy whatsoever are not to be baptized but hands only are to be laid upon them in penitence, then let this holy and heavenly tradition be observed. If, on the other hand, heretics are everywhere in those works termed nothing but adversaries and antichrists, if it is there declared that they are to be shunned as perverted and self-condemned, how is it that they should be thought as not meriting condemnation by us when it is clear from the testimony of the Apostle that they already stand condemned by themselves?¹⁰

2.4 No one, therefore, has the right to vilify the apostles by claiming that they gave approval to the baptisms of heretics or that they joined in communion with them without the baptism of the Church, seeing that the apostles have written such things of heretics; and that was at a time when the more virulent of the heretical plagues had not yet broken out! Marcion of Pontus had not yet emerged from out of his Pontic sea¹¹—his teacher was Cerdon, who came to Rome during the episcopate of Hyginus, and Hyginus was the ninth bishop in the City.¹² This Cerdon was the teacher Marcion followed, but by making enlargements and accretions to his wickedness he proceeded to show greater brazenness and violence than anyone else in blaspheming against God the Father, the Creator,¹³ and the fanaticism of heretics, already rebelling with the weapons of sacrilege against the Church, he now armed with yet more criminal and deadly weaponry.

3.1 Thus three things stand clear: that more and worse heresies arose after the time of the apostles; that nowhere in those early days was it anywhere prescribed or written down that only hands should be laid upon the heretic in penitence and that he should thus be admitted to communion; and that there is but one baptism, and that baptism is with us, on the inside, granted by the grace of God to the Church alone. If these things are so, I cannot comprehend the pig-headedness nor understand the presumption which places human tradition before divine ordinance, which fails to perceive that God is outraged and angered whenever some human tradition undermines or thrusts aside divine commands. Hence God cries out through the prophet Isaiah using these words: *These people honour me with their lips but their hearts are far removed from me. But in vain do they worship me, for they teach the commandments and doctrines of men.*

3.2 Likewise in the Gospel the Lord utters similar words of censure and reproach when He proclaims: *You cast aside the commandment of God in order to establish a tradition of your own.* Being mindful of this precept, the blessed apostle Paul in turn gives us these words of admonition and instruction: *If any man teaches otherwise and does not give his assent to the sound words and teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, being carried away by his own foolishness and acting in utter ignorance, you should avoid such a man.*¹⁴

4.1 Truly this is a noble and authentic tradition which is being placed before us by the teaching of our brother Stephen, and what suitable authority for it he presents to us! For in the same passage in his letter Stephen went on to add this remark: "since amongst heretics themselves they do not use their own rite of baptism on other heretics when they come to them, but they simply admit them to communion."

The Church of God, the bride of Christ, has fallen on such evil days that she is now to follow the example of heretics! In order to celebrate the heavenly sacraments, light has to borrow moral guidance¹⁵ from darkness, Christians are now to imitate the actions of antichrists.

4.2 What blindness of soul can this be, what perverseness, to refuse to acknowledge the unity of faith¹⁶ which proceeds from God the Father and from the tradition of Jesus Christ our Lord and God. For if it is the case that the Church is not with heretics for the reason that the Church is one and cannot be divided, and if the Holy Spirit is not with them for the reason that the Spirit is one and cannot be with outsiders and aliens, then it indeed follows that baptism cannot be with heretics either, for baptism is only to be found within that same unity: baptism can be separated neither from the Church nor from the Holy Spirit.

5.1 Now if they attribute the efficacy of baptism to the power of the Name, so that he who is baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ, no matter where nor in what manner, is judged renewed and sanctified, why then, among heretics, are not hands laid, in the Name of the same Christ, upon the person baptized so that he may receive the Holy Spirit?¹⁷ Why does the same power of the same Name, which they maintain had efficacy in the sanctification of baptism, have no efficacy in the laying-on of hands?

5.2 If it is possible for a man born outside the Church to become a temple of God, why should it not also be possible for the Holy Spirit to be poured out upon that temple? One who, having cast off his sins in baptism, has been sanctified and formed spiritually into a new man, has certainly been made fit for receiving the Holy Spirit. As the Apostle says: *All of you who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ.*¹⁸

5.3 A man, then, baptized among heretics, who is able to put on Christ, can all the more easily receive the Holy Spirit, for Christ was the one who sent the Spirit. Otherwise, for it to be possible that a person baptized outside might indeed put on Christ but be unable to receive the Holy Spirit, the one who is sent would have to be greater than the one who sends. As if, indeed, one could put on Christ without the Spirit or the Spirit could be separated from Christ!

5.4 And given the fact that our second birth is a spiritual birth and by it we are born in Christ through the waters of regeneration, it is equally absurd for them to argue that anyone can be thus born spiritually among heretics, while still denying that the Spirit is with them.¹⁹ Water by itself cannot cleanse sins and sanctify man unless it possesses the Holy Spirit as well.²⁰ Thus either they have to allow that the Spirit is also to be found where they argue there is baptism, or there is no baptism where there is no Spirit, for there cannot be baptism without the Spirit.

6.1 Moreover, how can they possibly assert and maintain that one may become a son of God without having been born within the Church? For it is in baptism that the old man dies and the new man is born, as the blessed Apostle makes manifestly clear and proves when he says: *He has saved us through the washing of rebirth.*

6.2 Now if rebirth is in this washing, that is to say, in baptism, how can heresy, which is not the bride of Christ, give birth to sons, through Christ, to God? It is the Church alone, being joined and united to Christ, who spiritually gives birth to sons, as the same Apostle once again says: *Christ loved the Church and He gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, washing and cleansing her by water.*²¹ And so, if she is His beloved, the bride who alone is sanctified by Christ and alone is cleansed by His washing, then obviously heresy,

being no bride of Christ and incapable of being cleansed or sanctified by His washing, is also incapable of giving birth to sons to God.²¹

7.1 Furthermore, it is not by the laying-on of hands (when the Holy Spirit is received) that a man is born, but it is in baptism: he must be born already, that he may receive the Spirit. This was so in the case of the first man, Adam: first of all God shaped him, and then He breathed onto his face the breath of life.²² 7.2 Thus the Spirit cannot be received unless there exists already the person to receive it.

Now the birth of Christians is in baptism; and the generation and sanctification of baptism are with the one bride of Christ. She alone is capable of spiritually bearing and giving birth to sons to God. This being so, where and of what mother and to whom is he born who is not a son of the Church? If a man is to have God for Father, he must first have the Church for mother.²³

7.3 But whereas no heresy whatsoever nor indeed any schism,²⁴ being outside the Church, can have the sanctification and saving power of baptism, yet the unyielding obstinacy of our brother Stephen has now hardened to such a degree that he insists that sons are born to God even from the baptism of Marcion, and from that of Valentinus as well as of Apelles and all the other blasphemers against God the Father;²⁵ and he argues that forgiveness of sins is there granted in the name of Jesus Christ where men blaspheme against the Father and against Christ, the Lord God.²⁶

8.1 At this point, dearly beloved brother, bearing in mind the sacred duties and obligations of the priestly office which we exercise, we must pause to consider whether on the day of reckoning the account a priest of God renders can be judged satisfactory if he supports, approves, and regards as acceptable²⁷ the baptisms of blasphemers. We must recall that the Lord has uttered these menacing words: *And now, my priests, this commandment is for you: if you will not heed it, if you will not place it in your heart to give honour to my name, says the Lord Almighty, then I shall send my curse upon you and your blessings I shall curse.*²⁸

8.2 Does he then give honour to God who admits the baptism of Marcion into his communion? Does he give honour to God who judges that forgiveness of sins is granted among those who blaspheme against God? Does he give honour to God who claims that sons of

God are born outside, of an adulteress and a whore? Does he give honour to God who, far from upholding the unity and truth prescribed by the law of God, champions the cause of heretics against the Church? Does he give honour to God who, being the friend of heretics and the foe of Christians, considers that those priests of God who seek to protect the truth of Christ and the unity of the Church deserve to be excommunicated?²⁹

8.3 If this is the way to give honour to God, if this is the way His worshipers and priests preserve the fear of God and His precepts, then let us throw down our arms, let us surrender ourselves into captivity, let us deliver over to the devil the regulations of the gospel, the ordinances of Christ, the very majesty of God. Let the oaths which bind us as soldiers to God's service be loosed, let the standards of the heavenly army be surrendered, let the Church give way and yield to heresy, light to darkness, faith to faithlessness, hope to hopelessness, reason to error, deathlessness to death, love to hatred, truth to falsehood, Christ to Antichrist.

8.4 Accordingly, it will come as no surprise that schisms and heresies spring up with each passing day, that they spread more thickly and more luxuriantly, that emerging like so many crested serpents they discharge with all the greater virulence their deadly venom against the Church of God.³⁰ And this is because all the while they are being offered authority and support by certain advocates on their behalf; their baptism is being defended, faith and truth are being betrayed; and what is being done outside the Church in opposition to the Church is being vindicated inside, within the very walls of the Church.

9.1 But if, most cherished brother, the fear of God is to be found amongst us, if we persevere in upholding the faith, if we stand watch over the precepts of Christ, if we guard the sanctity of His bride unspotted and undefiled, if there are impressed upon our minds and hearts the words of the Lord who says: *And when the Son of Man comes, do you think He will find faith on earth?*, then, as faithful soldiers of God, campaigning for God with faith and wholehearted dedication, let us protect courageously and faithfully the encampment which God has entrusted to our charge.³¹

9.2 And as for the custom which had wormed its way in amongst certain people, this must not stand in the way of the trium-

phant victory of truth. For a custom without truth is but error grown old.³² And so, forsaking error let us follow the truth, in the knowledge that truth is victorious, as we find written in the book of Esdras: *The truth abides and grows in strength for all eternity, she lives on and prevails for endless ages. With truth there is no distinction between persons, no discrimination; she does what is just and in her judgments there is no inequity, and she is the strength, kingdom, majesty, and power of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth.* And it is this same truth that Christ reveals to us when He says in His Gospel: *I am the truth.* Therefore, if we are in Christ and we have Christ in us, and if we abide in the truth and the truth abides in us, let us hold fast to those things which are true.³³

10.1 But it is unrepentant presumption and insolence that induces men to defend their own perverse errors instead of giving their assent to what is right and true, but has come from another. The blessed apostle Paul foresaw this when he wrote to Timothy with the admonition that a bishop should not be wrangling or quarrelsome but gentle and teachable. Now, a man is teachable if he is meek and gentle and patient in learning. It is thus a bishop's duty not only to teach; he must also learn. For he becomes a better teacher if he makes daily progress and advancement in learning what is better. 10.2 This lesson the same apostle Paul also teaches us, forewarning that should anything better be revealed to another who is seated, then the earlier speaker should fall silent.³⁴

But hearts that are devout and honest have a quick route available for putting aside error and for finding and extracting the truth. For if we go back to the source and fountainhead of divine tradition, human error ceases; we there command a clear view of the nature of the heavenly mysteries, and whatever has lain hidden in obscurity under cover of mist and under cloud of darkness is now brought out into the light of truth. It is as when a conduit supplying water, which has previously flowed in copious abundance, should suddenly fail. Do we not go to the source in order to find out the cause of the failure, to discover whether the water has dried up at the fountainhead because the streams which feed it are parched, or whether the water does indeed gush forth from there in full and uninterrupted flow but has come to a stop in mid-course? If the channel there is leaking or obstructed and as a result of this fault the water is prevented from flowing in a steady and continuous stream, do we not repair and rein-

force the conduit so that the water collected for benefit of the town, for drinking and other uses, may be restored to the same fullness and abundance with which it issues from its source?

10.3 Those bishops of God who would be faithful to His divine precepts ought now to act in like manner. If in any respect the truth has grown faltering or shaky, we must go back to the Lord as our source, and to the tradition of the Gospels and the apostles. Let our conduct draw its rules from the same source from which our beginnings and our precepts took their rise.³⁵

11.1 And the tradition handed down to us is that there is one God and one Christ, one hope and one faith, one Church and one baptism appointed only in that one Church.³⁶ Whoever departs from that unity must be found in company with heretics; and in defending heretics against the Church, he is launching an attack upon the sacred mystery of this divine tradition.

11.2 The sacred mystery of this unity we also see expressed in the person of Christ, who says in the Song of Songs: *An enclosed garden is my sister, my bride, a sealed fountain, a well of living water, an orchard of fruits.*³⁷ Now if this Church is an enclosed garden and a sealed fountain, how is it possible for anyone who is not within the Church to enter that garden or to drink from its fountain?

11.3 Peter himself, too, likewise drew attention to this unity and insisted upon it when he charged and warned us that we cannot be saved except through the one and only baptism of this one Church. *In the ark of Noah, he said, a very few men (eight souls all told) were saved by water. And it is in just the same manner that baptism will save you also.* Here he has expressed to us by means of this succinct and spiritual summary the sacred mystery of that unity.³⁸ For just as in the case of that baptism of the world through which the iniquity of old was washed away, if a man was not in the ark of Noah he was unable to be saved by water, so too now, if someone has not been baptized within the Church, he cannot be considered saved by baptism, for the Church is founded upon that unity prescribed by the Lord, after the sacred model of the one ark.

12 In conclusion, dearly beloved brother, having searched out and found the truth, we firmly hold this view and the practice we follow is this: all who come over to the Church from any heresy whatsoever are to be baptized in the only and lawful baptism of the

Church. Exception is to be made of those who had been previously baptized in the Church and then had gone over to heresy; when they return and have done penance, they need be received simply by the laying-on of hands and so may be restored by their shepherd to the fold from which they had strayed.³⁹

I wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well.

LETTER 75

*Firmilian sends greetings in the Lord to Cyprian, his brother.*¹

1.1 We have received, most cherished brother, the letter you wrote to us, from the hands of the deacon you sent, our dearly beloved Rogatianus.² And we have given hearty thanks to God for our good fortune that while we are separated from each other in body, we are so united together in spirit as though we were not merely dwelling in the same country but actually living together in the one and the same house.³ 1.2 And it is only right and proper that we should make this observation, since the spiritual house of God is indeed one: *For in the last days (it says) the mountain of the Lord shall be made manifest and the house of God shall be visible upon the mountain peaks.* Those who gather together in that house are united with gladness, conforming to the prayer put to the Lord by the Psalmist that he might dwell all the days of his life in the house of God. Hence in another passage it is made clear that the saints are keen and eager to gather together as one: *See (it says) how good and pleasant it is that brethren should dwell as one.*⁴

2.1 And it is not only to men that union, peace, and harmony provide the highest of pleasures, it is also to the angels of heaven themselves; for we are told by the word of God that they rejoice over one sinner who repents and returns to the bond of unity.⁵ 2.2 And this would most certainly not be said of angels, who have their dwelling place in the heavens,⁶ if they who take such delight in our union were not also themselves united to us; by the reverse token, they are most certainly grieved to observe that some among us are contrary in mind and split into factions. For they see that they do not join with

their fellows in calling upon God, who is one and the same for us all; and that, in addition, being so separated and divided from the others, it becomes no longer possible for them even to converse and discuss together.⁷

2.3 I suppose, all the same, we can be grateful to Stephen for this: his appalling discourtesy has had the present happy result that we have experienced direct demonstration of your faith and wisdom. But it does not have to follow because, thanks to Stephen, we have gained this benefit and profit, that Stephen himself should be credited with meritorious action that is beneficial and profitable. Just in the same way Judas cannot be regarded as meritorious for his treacherous and treasonable action which he so wickedly committed against our Saviour,⁸ on the grounds that he has been personally responsible for such great blessings: thanks to him, the world and all the Gentiles have been set free through the sufferings of the Lord.

3.1 But for the present, let us put aside these actions of Stephen's; we have no desire to prolong our distress at his outrageous actions by calling to mind his insulting arrogance. But if we turn our minds rather to you we are filled with great joy and give thanks to God: you have arrived at your settlement on the question presently before us in conformity with the rule of truth and the wisdom of Christ,⁹ and we have found in brethren so far distant from us such unanimity of faith and truth with us. 3.2 For the grace of God has power to link and join together by the bonds of charity and unity even what might appear to be held apart by vast distances. Hence, too, of old, God in His might was able to bind together by the same bond of unanimity Job and Noah, who lived in the earliest days, and Ezekiel and Daniel, who came in a later age, despite the fact that they were separated by a long interval of time: though divided by a wide gulf of years, through divine inspiration they were still of the one mind.

3.3 So, too, now we can see this apply in your own case. You are separated from us by the greatest of distances, but you prove yourselves to be still united with us in mind and spirit. All of which is the effect of the divine unity. For the Lord who dwells within us is one and the same, and He links and joins together those who are His own, wherever they are, by the same bonds of unity. Hence the cries of those who were sent forth by the Lord have gone out to all the ends of the earth;¹⁰ for they have been running swiftly onwards,

animated by that spirit of unity. On the other hand, it is perfectly useless for men physically to be very close and bound to each other if they disagree in mind and soul; for it is quite impossible for hearts to be united if they have cut themselves off from God's unity. See (it says) *those who put themselves far from you shall perish*.

3.4 Such men will have to face the judgment of the Lord in the way they deserve, in that they forsake the Lord's words by which He prays to the Father for unity, saying: *Father, grant that as I and you are one, so they also may be one in us*.¹¹

4.1 But, for our part, the words you have written we have adopted as our own. And these words we have not just read cursorily: rather, we have committed them to memory, going over them again and again.¹² Nor will it be any impediment to the interests of salvation if, for consolidating the truth, we reword those same ideas of yours or even, for the purposes of accumulating supporting proofs, we add some points of our own. 4.2 And yet, if we do make some addition, that is not to say that there is any inadequacy in what you said. But the fact is, the divine word is far above the powers of human nature; no one soul is capable of conceiving the whole of it in its entirety. Hence the need for that great number of prophets, so that the divine wisdom, being so many-sided, might be imparted by many different people. And for this same reason it is enjoined that the first one to be speaking in prophecy is to fall silent, should revelation come to a second.¹³

4.3 And for this same reason, too, we find it needful that each year we should hold an assembly of Church leaders and elders to set in order the affairs entrusted to our care;¹⁴ any matters of importance may thus be regulated by us in Council together; and a cure may be sought, as well, in penance for brethren who have fallen and are wounded by the devil after the saving waters of baptism¹⁵—not that they gain from *us* remission of their sins,¹⁶ but through us they may be brought to a realization of their transgressions and thus be led to render fuller satisfaction to the Lord.

5.1 But as your messenger whom you sent is in a hurry to get back to you and the season of winter is fast approaching,¹⁷ we are replying to what you wrote as best we can.¹⁸

5.2 Firstly, there is the claim made by Stephen that the apostles not only forbade that those who come from heresy should be baptized

but that they have handed down this teaching to be observed by posterity.¹⁹ So far as concerns this claim, you have made a very full rejoinder, showing that no one is stupid enough to believe that the apostles did transmit this teaching, since it is a fact that heresies themselves, with all their vileness and abominations, came into existence only later.²⁰ Thus Marcion, the disciple of Cerdon, is known to have introduced his sacrilegious doctrines against God much later than the apostles and, indeed, long after their time. Apelles, also, while agreeing with Marcion's blasphemies, made many novel additions to them which were even more seriously contrary to faith and truth.²¹ Furthermore, the dates of Valentinus and Basilides are not in dispute:²² in their case, too, it was after the time of the apostles, indeed a long period afterwards, that they raised their rebellion against the Church of God with their particular set of pernicious lies. 5.3 And it is clear that it was only later that all the other heretics as well, according to the error which led each of them astray, introduced their own evil sects and their own vicious fabrications. But in the case of every one of them, there is no doubt that they stand self-condemned and that even before the day of judgment they have pronounced with their own lips against themselves a sentence from which there is no escaping.²³

And so, whoever gives approval to the baptism of the likes of these must be, in effect, passing judgment upon himself along with them: by making himself their partner, he damns himself.

6.1 And anyone can see that those who are in Rome do not observe in all particulars those things which were handed down from the beginning; it is pointless, therefore, for them to parade the authority of the apostles. This we can appreciate from the fact that in the celebration of the season of Easter and in many other points of religious observance we notice there are certain differences to be found among them: their practices are not all exactly the same as those in Jerusalem.²⁴ This is as we find in very many other provinces: there is a great deal of diversity, just as the places and peoples themselves vary. And yet it does not follow from this that there has been any departure at all from the peace and unity of the catholic Church.

6.2 But Stephen has now had the hide to make just such a departure. He breaks off peace with you,²⁵ a peace which his predecessors always preserved with you in a spirit of mutual love and

respect. And besides that, he traduces the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, claiming that it was they who handed down this tradition, whereas, in fact, in their epistles they execrated heretics and warned us to shun their company.²⁶ We can see clearly, therefore, that it is a human tradition which supports the case of heretics and defends their claim to possess the power to baptize, a power which belongs to the one Church and that Church alone.

7.1 And you have also well answered that part in Stephen's letter where he stated that heretics themselves are in agreement over the question of baptism and that "amongst themselves they do not baptize other heretics when they come to them but they simply admit them to communion,"—and he so stated it as if we, too, had a duty to do likewise!²⁷

7.2 In connexion with this passage, even though you have already established that it is the height of absurdity for anyone to follow in the footsteps of the erring, we make this further observation, superfluous though it is, that it is hardly surprising that heretics should act in this way. They may differ over minor matters amongst themselves, but on this question of major importance they are in total agreement: they all blaspheme the Creator, dreaming up for themselves visions and fantasies of some unknown God. The inevitable result is that just as they are of one mind in rejecting the truth on the Godhead, so they are of one mind in approving the folly of their own baptism.²⁸

7.3 It would indeed be tedious to refute all their individual notions, wicked or merely empty-headed as they may be. So let it suffice to put the matter briefly and succinctly: those who do not possess the true Lord the Father cannot possess, either, the truth on the Son or on the Holy Spirit. Hence, for example, those called Cataphrygians,²⁹ who try to claim they have new prophecies, can possess neither the Father nor the Son, because they do not possess the Holy Spirit.³⁰ For if we ask them what Christ they preach, they will reply that they preach the one who sent the spirit which spoke through Montanus and Prisca.³¹ But since we can perceive that there was in these no spirit of truth but only of error, we draw the conclusion that those who defend their false prophecy against the faith of Christ cannot possess Christ Himself.

7.4 But this is true also of all the other heretics: if they have cut

themselves off from the Church of God, they are without power or grace, since all power and grace is vested in the Church. There the elders sit in authority—they are the ones who possess the powers of baptizing and laying-on of hands and of appointing to clerical office.³² And as it is unlawful for a heretic so to appoint or to lay on hands, so neither is it lawful for him to baptize or indeed to perform any holy or spiritual act: he is an outcast from all spiritual and sanctifying holiness.³³

All of this, in fact, was the view we ratified that we should stoutly maintain and defend against the heretic at a meeting we held a long time ago now at a place in Phrygia called Iconium; we gathered there from Galatia and Cilicia and the other regions round about, for at the time some were of two minds on the matter.³⁴

8.1 But Stephen and his adherents insist that heretical baptism can produce remission of sins and the second birth,³⁵ even though they admit themselves that heretics do not have the Holy Spirit.³⁶

In view of this, they must realize and understand that there can be no spiritual birth without the Spirit. Accordingly, those whom John had baptized before the Holy Spirit was sent by the Lord were baptized afresh with spiritual baptism by the blessed apostle Paul, and he then laid hands upon them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.³⁷ 8.2 What an absurdity it is that while we see that Paul baptized his own disciples a second time after the baptism of John, we should hesitate to baptize those who come to the Church from heresy after their unlawful and unholy immersion.³⁸ The explanation must be that Paul was inferior to these bishops of today! The latter are able, simply by the laying-on of hands, to impart the Holy Spirit to heretics who come to them, whereas Paul was not capable of imparting the Holy Spirit, by the laying-on of hands, to those who had been baptized by John, without first baptizing them with the baptism of the Church.

9.1 But there is more absurdity: they consider there is no need to inquire who it is who has administered baptism, arguing that the person baptized can have obtained grace merely by the invocation of the Trinity, of the Names of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.³⁹

It follows that this is the wisdom which Paul writes is to be found in those who are perfected!⁴⁰ This is what the man who has

been perfected in the Church and is wise must believe and defend, viz. that the mere invocation of these Names suffices for obtaining the remission of sins and the sanctification of baptism. But, in fact, these Names are effective when, and only when, both the person who baptizes possesses the Holy Spirit and the baptism itself also has not been established without the Spirit.⁴¹ 9.2 And they further contend that, whatever the manner of the baptism outside the Church, a man may obtain the grace of baptism by virtue of his personal faith and disposition.⁴²

That, too, is obviously preposterous, as though a corrupt disposition could have power to draw down to itself from heaven the sanctification of the righteous, or a false faith the truth of believers. That not all who invoke the name of Christ are heard, that in their case such invocation cannot obtain any grace, the Lord Himself makes clear with these words: *Many will come in my name, saying: I am the Christ, and they will deceive many.*⁴³ We must remember that there is no distinction between a false prophet and a heretic: the one deceives in the name of God or Christ, the latter in the sacrament of baptism, but both rely on falsehood for misleading the minds of men.

10.1 I should like now to recount to you an incident, relevant to this present matter, which happened in our area.

About twenty-two years ago, in the period after the Emperor Severus Alexander, a great number of trials and tribulations befell in these parts both the whole community generally and the Christians in particular.⁴⁴ There occurred a long succession of earthquakes, as a result of which many buildings throughout Cappadocia and Pontus collapsed, and even towns were swallowed up by crevasses opening out in the ground, sinking into the abyss. In consequence, there arose against us a violent persecution for the Name;⁴⁵ it broke out suddenly after there had been a lengthy period of peace, and its effect was all the more devastating in throwing our people into disarray because trouble of this kind was so unexpected and novel to them.⁴⁶ Serenianus was governor of our province at the time, a bitter and relentless persecutor.⁴⁷

10.2 The faithful, finding themselves in the midst of this upheaval, took to flight in all directions in fear of persecution; they abandoned their home territories and moved to other parts of the country (they were free so to move, in that this persecution was local

and did not extend to the whole world).⁴⁸ Suddenly, a certain woman started up in our midst: she presented herself as a prophetess, being in a state of ecstasy and acting as if she were filled with the Holy Spirit. But she was so deeply under the sway and control of the principal demons that she managed to disturb and deceive the brethren for a long time by performing astonishing and preternatural feats, and she even promised that she would cause the earth to quake: not that her devil had such power that he was able to cause an earthquake or disturb the elements by his own efforts, but that, as an evil spirit, possessing the gift of foreknowledge and therefore perceiving that there was to be an earthquake, he sometimes pretended that he was going to do that which he saw was going to happen.⁴⁹

10.3 Thus, by means of these mendacious and boastful pretensions he so succeeded in subjecting the minds of certain devotees to his sway that they gave him their obedience and would follow him wherever he directed and led. And as for that woman, he would make her go in the very depths of winter through the bitter snow in bare feet, and not be in the least troubled or injured by her walk; he would say that he must be off to Judea and Jerusalem, giving the false impression that he had come from there.⁵⁰

10.4 And here, too, he so managed to trick one of the presbyters, a country fellow,⁵¹ and another also, a deacon, that they lay with this woman. This was discovered shortly afterwards, for one of the exorcists⁵² suddenly appeared before him; this was a man of established integrity and of exemplary life in all matters of religious observance, having been urged and exhorted by a number of the brethren who were themselves praiseworthy and steadfast in the faith.⁵³ And so he drew himself up against this evil spirit to overpower him—and by a subtle piece of trickery that spirit had even foretold shortly beforehand that there was about to come against him a certain hostile assailant, an unbeliever.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, that exorcist, being inspired with the grace of God, stoutly withstood him and succeeded in revealing that the spirit which had previously been thought holy was in fact thoroughly evil.

10.5 And that woman, through the illusions and trickeries of the devil, had devised a number of ways for deceiving the faithful. Among other practices by which she deceived many, she frequently dared even to use this one: employing a by no means despicable form

of invocation, she would pretend to sanctify the bread and celebrate the Eucharist,⁵⁵ and she would offer the sacrifice to the Lord not without the sacred recitation of the wonted ritual formula.⁵⁶ And she would baptize many also, adopting the customary and legitimate wording of the baptismal interrogation.⁵⁷ And all this she did in such a way that she appeared to deviate in no particular from ecclesiastical discipline.

11.1 What, then, are we to say about such a baptism, where an evil demon baptized through the agency of a woman?⁵⁸ Can it be that Stephen and his adherents extend their approval even to this baptism, especially as it came complete with Trinitarian credal formula⁵⁹ and the legitimate baptismal interrogation of the Church? Is it credible that forgiveness of sins was granted or that the rebirth of the saving waters was duly accomplished in a case where everything may have been done in semblance of the truth but was in fact done through the agency of a demon? Otherwise we must presume that those who champion the baptisms of heretics maintain that even the devil conferred the grace of baptism in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And yet error is doubtless to be found among all heretics along with the very delusions of the devils, inasmuch as they are entirely without the Holy Spirit.

12.1 And how can it be that Stephen should insist that Christ and all His holiness can be present in those who are baptized among heretics? For if the Apostle does not lie when he says: *All of you who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ*,⁶⁰ then whoever has been baptized in Christ among them has indeed put on Christ. And if he has put on Christ, he could have received as well the Holy Spirit, who was sent by Christ. There is no point, therefore, in laying hands upon such a one, when he comes to us, for receiving the Holy Spirit,⁶¹ unless it is perhaps the case that they separate Spirit from Christ, so that Christ may indeed be with heretics, but not the Holy Spirit.⁶²

13.1 But let us now use brevity in running through the other points you have made so abundantly and fully, especially since our dearly beloved deacon Rogatianus is in great haste to reach you.⁶³

The next point is this. We must ask those who defend heretics whether their baptism is of the flesh or of the spirit. If they say the flesh, then their baptism is no different from that of the Jews—they

so use it merely to wash off bodily dirt as in a common and ordinary bath. But if they say the spirit, then we must ask how it is possible for them to have spiritual baptism when they do not have the Holy Spirit.

Thus the water in which they are immersed is merely a bath for their flesh; it is not the holy rite of baptism.

14.1 Now if the baptism of heretics is to have the regenerative effect of the second birth, then those who are baptized among them are to be reckoned not as heretics but as sons of God. For the second birth, which is in baptism, gives birth to sons of God. But if the bride of Christ, that is to say, the catholic Church, is one, then she alone is the one who gives birth to sons of God. For Christ does not have a number of brides, as the Apostle says: *I have betrothed you to Christ as a chaste virgin to her one husband.* And: *Listen, my daughter, see and turn your ear; forget your people, for the king has desired your beauty.* And: *Come, my bride, from Lebanon; come to me, crossing over from the source of faith.* And: *I have entered my garden, my sister, my bride.*⁶⁴

In all these cases we see there is one person presented to us, because there is only the one bride.

14.2 But the synagogue of heretics is by no means one with us,⁶⁵ because the bride is neither adulteress nor whore—hence that synagogue is unable to produce children of God. Unless, perhaps (as Stephen seems to think), heresy does produce them but exposes them; and the Church then takes up these exposed children and rears as her own those whom she has not produced herself,⁶⁶ whereas, in fact, she cannot be the mother of alien children.

And that is why Christ our Lord, revealing that His bride is one and proclaiming the sacred mystery of that oneness, says: *Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me, scatters.*⁶⁷ If, therefore, Christ is with us, but heretics are not with us, then heretics must certainly be against Christ; and if we gather with Christ, but heretics do not gather with us, then heretics must undoubtedly scatter.

15.1 And here we must not fail to mention a point which you found it essential to make yourself, that the Church, according to the Song of Songs, is an enclosed garden, a sealed fountain, a paradise of fruit-laden trees.⁶⁸ But as for those who have never entered this garden nor looked upon that paradise planted by God the Creator, how

would it be possible for them to supply to anyone the living waters that cleanse and save, which are drawn from the fountain that is thus enclosed inside and sealed with the divine seal?

15.2 The ark of Noah, too, was precisely a prefigurement of the Church of Christ: at that time, while all on the outside were perishing, the ark saved only those who were inside the ark. By this figure our attention is plainly being drawn to the unity of the Church, just as Peter has declared: *So, too, will baptism in like manner save us.*⁶⁹ Here he is revealing to us that just as those who were not with Noah in the ark failed not only to be cleansed and saved by water but perished forthwith in that deluge, so, too, now whoever are not with Christ in the Church will perish, being on the outside, unless they repent and turn to the one and only, the saving waters of the Church.

16.1 Egregious is the error and profound the blindness of one who declares that forgiveness of sins can be given in the synagogues of heretics and who does not remain within the foundations of that one Church which were firmly laid by Christ, once and for all, upon the rock. This we can perceive from the fact that Christ said to Peter and to Peter alone: *Whatsoever you have bound on earth will be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you have loosed on earth will be loosed also in heaven.* And again, in the Gospel, Christ breathed on the apostles and the apostles alone, saying: *Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you have forgiven, they shall be forgiven them; whose sins you have retained, they shall be retained.*⁷⁰ Thus the power to forgive sins was given to the apostles and to the churches which they, sent forth by Christ, established and to the bishops who have in turn succeeded those apostles, appointed to replace them.⁷¹

16.2 But those who are hostile to the one, catholic Church, in which we are, and those who oppose us, the successors of the apostles, are laying claim, against us, to priesthoods that are unlawful to them and they set up altars that are unholy. They are imitating precisely Core, Dathan, and Abiron; they are guilty of like sacrilege and they are going to suffer the same punishments as they did, they and all their adherents, just as in those days, too, their supporters and partners perished with them in a like death.⁷²

17.1 At this point I become filled with righteous indignation at Stephen's crass and obvious stupidity. He is a man who finds the location of his bishopric such a source of pride,⁷³ who keeps insisting

that he occupies the succession to Peter, upon whom the foundations of the Church were laid; and yet, by using his authority to defend heretical baptism, he is introducing many other rocks and he is laying the foundations of and building up many new churches.

17.2 Now those who are baptized, we all agree, make up the full muster of the Church. So, whoever approves of *their* baptism, is asserting that where they are who were thus baptized, there the Church also is; and such a person fails to realize that he is blurring and, so to speak, effacing the truth of the Christian rock by so betraying and deserting Christian unity. Even the Jews, as the Apostle acknowledges, though blind with ignorance and bound down with their great burden of guilt, still have zeal for God.⁷⁴ Whereas Stephen, who vaunts that he has succeeded to the occupancy of the chair of Peter, is stirred by no such zeal against heresy; instead, he concedes to heretics not some modest but the very greatest power to confer grace, going so far as to claim and assert that they wash away the filth of the old man by their holy rite of baptism, that they pardon the ancient and deadly sins,⁷⁵ that they generate sons of God through the heavenly rebirth, and that by the sanctification of the divine waters they revivify them for eternal life.

17.3 But if he thus yields and concedes to heretics these mighty, these heavenly gifts that belong to the Church, what he is doing is tantamount to joining in communion with those for whom he is staunchly claiming so much grace. There is no point now in his hesitating to join in agreement with them on everything else as well and to enter into partnership with them: he may as well join in their assemblies, join with them in prayer and set up altar and sacrifice jointly with them.

18.1 But, he claims, the Name of Christ has great efficacy in the matter of faith and the sanctification of baptism; and, therefore, if a person, whoever he is and wherever he may be, is baptized in that Name of Christ, then that person gains at once the grace of Christ.⁷⁶

This objection can be briefly met with the reply that if baptism given outside the Church in the Name of Christ does have the power to cleanse a man, then laying-on of hands in the Name of the same Christ ought there likewise to have the power to confer the Holy Spirit. 18.2 And in that case, all the other actions performed by heretics will start to seem valid and authentic, seeing that they are all

done in the Name of Christ—whereas, in fact, as you have argued in your letter,⁷⁷ the Name of Christ can be powerful solely within the Church: to her alone has Christ granted the privilege of conferring the graces of heaven.

19.1 Furthermore, it seems, they are setting up custom in opposition to truth.

As for refuting this argument of theirs based on custom, we ask who would be so empty-headed as to prefer custom to truth, or who would not abandon the darkness having perceived the light. 19.2 Unless, indeed, one would want to claim that since the coming of Christ, that is to say, the coming of Truth, their most ancient customs have proved to be of some benefit to the Jews, seeing that they have rejected the new way of truth and have clung to hoary antiquity!

19.3 And on this matter you Africans can certainly say in answer to Stephen that when you discovered the truth, you, for your part, rejected the error of custom.⁷⁸ Whereas in our own case we combine custom and truth together, and to the custom of the Romans we can set in opposition another custom, but in this case it is the custom of truth, maintaining as we have done right from the start this tradition of ours, handed down by Christ and the apostles. For we have no recollection of this custom ever having had a beginning among us, since it has always been observed here;⁷⁹ hence we have always known but the one Church of God and we have acknowledged no baptism as holy but that of the holy Church.

19.4 But some did feel in two minds about the baptism of those who, while welcoming the new prophets, still seemed to acknowledge the same Father and Son as we do.⁸⁰ And so we held a large assembly at Iconium and there, after scrupulous examination of the question, we ratified the view that every baptism whatsoever established outside the Church is to be repudiated.

20 In their defence of heretics they also quote the words of the Apostle: *whether in pretence or in truth Christ is being proclaimed*.⁸¹

To this we reply that this quotation is beside the point: it is obvious that in his epistle in which he said these words, the Apostle made no mention either of heretics or of their baptism. He was referring to *brethren* only (whether they spoke to him in hypocritical deceit or whether they persevered in honest faith). There is no need, therefore, to labour this matter at great length; all one has to do is to

read the epistle itself and find out from the Apostle himself what the Apostle in fact said.

21.1 What, then, they ask, will become of those who, on coming from heresy, were admitted to our communion without receiving the baptism of the Church?⁸²

If they have departed this world, they are to be ranked in the same category as catechumens who, while having received instructions from us, nevertheless died before receiving baptism: they have won no small blessings from the true faith to which they had come after forsaking error, though, being overtaken by death, they failed to obtain the fullness of grace.⁸³

21.2 But should they still remain in this world, then they are to receive the baptism of the Church so that they may obtain forgiveness of their sins; otherwise they run the danger that, thanks to the presumption of others, they may remain in their old error and, thus, die without receiving the fullness of grace.⁸⁴

21.3 And besides, what guilt is theirs who are admitted to communion and theirs who so admit them! Without washing away their filth in the waters of the Church, without putting aside their sins, rashly claiming the right to join in communion, they touch the body and blood of the Lord, even though it is written: *Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*⁸⁵

22.1 There are also those who have been baptized by men who had once been bishops in the catholic Church but who afterwards usurped the powers of their lost clerical rank.⁸⁶

In the case of these, the judgment we have reached is that they are to be regarded as unbaptized, and the practice we observe is that all who come to us after being immersed by them are treated as strangers who have received nothing. They are baptized with us in the one, true baptism of the catholic Church, and so receive the rebirth of the life-giving waters.

22.2 And yet there is a great difference between someone who fell against his will, overwhelmed by the pressures of persecution, and one who of his own sacrilegious will riots and rebels against the Church or proclaims unholy blasphemies against the Father, the God of Christ and the Creator of the entire universe.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, Stephen is not ashamed to go so far as to assert

that forgiveness of sins can be granted through these, despite the fact that they are themselves steeped in every form of sin—as if in the house of death there could exist the waters of salvation.

23.1 And what will then become of the words of Scripture, *Keep away from alien water and drink not from an alien fountain*, if you forsake the sealed fountain of the Church, adopt as your own alien water, and pollute the Church with profane fountains?⁸⁸ And by entering into communion with the baptism of heretics, what you are simply doing is drinking from their cesspit and mire, and while you were yourself once cleansed and sanctified by the Church, you are now befouling yourself by your contact with the filth of these strangers.

23.2 Have you no fear of the judgment of God when you provide heretics with this sort of witness against the Church, even though it is written: *A false witness shall not go unpunished*?⁸⁹ What is more, you are worse than all the heretics; for when they come over to you from heresy in large numbers, realizing the error of their ways and seeking to receive the true light of the Church, you aid and abet in their errors those who thus come, and by darkening the light of the Church's truth you intensify the darkness of their night of heresy. And whereas they confess they are in a state of sin and are without grace and that is why they are coming over to the Church, you actually rob them of the forgiveness of sins which is granted in baptism by telling them that they are already baptized and have obtained outside the Church the graces of the Church. And you fail to appreciate that when the day of judgment comes, it will be from your hands that their souls will be sought, having denied the drink of the Church to those who were thirsty⁹⁰ and having been the cause of death to those who wished to have life.

And after all that, you still feel indignant!

24.1 Look at your bungling ignorance: you have the nerve to heap reproaches on those who toil away defending the truth against falsehood! Who, then, ought to have the greater justification in feeling indignant against the other—the one who champions the enemies of God, or rather the one who takes his stand against those enemies of God in defence of the truth of the Church?

But the ignorant, it is plain, are also given to intemperance and anger—being wanting in counsel and weak in argument, they

easily incline to anger. Hence the words of divine Scripture apply most particularly to you: *The intemperate provoke quarrels, the angry heap sins upon themselves.* Look, for instance, at the quarrels, the dissensions you have provoked throughout the churches all over the world!⁹¹ Look at the magnitude of the sin you have heaped upon yourself by cutting yourself off from so many flocks! And cut yourself off you most certainly have, make no mistake about it, since the genuine schismatic is the person who has made himself an apostate from the communion and the unity of the Church. While imagining it was in your power to excommunicate everyone, you have in fact succeeded in excommunicating yourself alone, from everyone else!⁹²

24.3 And the precepts even of the Apostle have been unable to make you conform to the rule of truth and peace, even though he has admonished us with these words: *And so I entreat you, I a prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling to which you are called, being always humble in spirit and gentle, patiently and charitably bearing with one another, striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, one Spirit, just as you have been called in the one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all things and in us all.*⁹³

25.1 How scrupulously has Stephen fulfilled these salutary commands and admonishments of the Apostle, preserving above all else humility of spirit and gentleness! For what could show greater humility and gentleness than to have quarrelled with so many bishops all over the world, rupturing peace with them individually in a rich array of discord,⁹⁴ now with Easterners—as we trust is no secret to you⁹⁵—now with Southerners like yourselves. Indeed, he showed such patience and gentleness in welcoming bishops you had sent as envoys⁹⁶ that he would not admit them just to converse and confer; and so mindful was he of the need for charity and love that he even went so far as to issue orders to the entire brotherhood that no one was to receive them into his own home. So when they came they were denied not only peace and communion but even a roof and shelter.⁹⁷

25.2 This is a fine example of preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: to cut himself off from that unity of charity, to

alienate himself from his brethren in everything, in a frenzied fit of quarreling to rise in rebellion against the sacred bonds and obligations of peace. With such a person can there possibly be one body, one Spirit, seeing that perhaps there may not be even one soul, so slippery is it, so inconstant, so unstable?

But that is enough about him; let us leave the subject.

25.3 Let us, instead, turn to examine the central issue of our inquiry. Whoever insists that those baptized by heretics ought to be received exactly as though they have obtained the grace of legitimate baptism, is saying that they and we have the one baptism and there is no difference at all between theirs and ours.

But what does the apostle Paul say? *One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.*⁹⁸

If the baptism of heretics is one and the same with ours, then without doubt there is also one faith between us. And if there is one faith, there is surely also one Lord. And if there is one Lord, it has to follow that there is one God.⁹⁹ But if this unity—absolutely incapable of being severed or broken—is itself also with heretics, why should we keep up the struggle any further? Why, then, call them heretics, and not Christians?

But, in reality, as we and heretics have neither the one God, nor one Lord, nor one Church, nor one faith, nor, besides, one Spirit or one body, then obviously we and heretics cannot have baptism in common either, for we have absolutely nothing in common.

25.4 And, besides, does Stephen feel no shame in offering his advocacy to the likes of these, in opposition to the Church, and in shattering unity among the brethren all for the sake of giving support to heretics, and in going even so far as to call Cyprian a bogus Christ, a bogus apostle, and a crooked dealer?¹⁰⁰ And being well aware that all this applies to himself, he has taken the initiative in hurling, falsely, against another these very names which by rights he ought to be called himself.

All of us wish, for all our sakes,¹⁰¹ that you fare well along with all the bishops who are there in Africa, the whole of the clergy, and every one of the brethren. Being one in spirit and one in mind, may we ever find you in unity with us, though we are far apart.

LETTER 76

Cyprian sends eternal greetings to his fellow bishops Nemesianus, Felix, Lucius, a second Felix, Litteus, Polianus, Victor, Iader, and Dativus, as well as to his fellow presbyters, to the deacons, and to all the other brethren, now in the mine,¹ martyrs of God the Father Almighty and of Jesus Christ our Lord and God our Saviour.²

1.1 Most blessed and most beloved brethren, were I not confined to the limits of this place appointed to me, to which I have been banished for confessing the Name as you also have done,³ then the glory you have achieved would most certainly have obliged and required of me that I come personally to visit and embrace you.⁴ However, I now make myself present among your company in the way that I can: even though not at liberty physically to approach and to visit you in person, I do nevertheless visit you in love and in spirit, expressing by this letter the sentiments that are in my heart. I am jubilant and exultant at your deeds of valour and renown, and I reckon myself to have a share in them, if not through the sufferings of the body, at least through the communion of charity.

1.2 Is it conceivable that I could restrain my tongue in silence and hold my peace at a time when I have learned of the many glorious exploits of dearest friends of mine? Through those deeds God has favoured and honoured you: some of your number have already gone on ahead to receive from the Lord their crown for their deserts, having brought their martyrdom to its accomplishment, while others of you still linger on behind, incarcerated in prisons or enchained in mines. But it is thanks to these very delays in your sufferings that you are providing lessons that are all the more effective for strengthening and arming your brethren; it is thanks to this protraction of your torments that you now go forward to be awarded all the more illustrious distinctions for your services, for amongst your heavenly recompenses you are sure to win as many rewards as there now are days you can count spent in punishments.⁵

1.3 Considering your meritorious piety and faith, I find no cause for wonder, most blessed and valorous brethren, that these

events should now have befallen you and that the Lord should have thus honoured and ennobled you by raising you up onto the loftiest eminence of glory. For all along you have strenuously maintained within His Church the tenacity and integrity of your faith, steadfastly preserving the prescriptions of the Lord, observing innocence in simplicity, harmony in charity, modesty in humility, and zeal in the service of others. You have shown yourselves vigilant in bringing aid to the suffering, merciful in bringing relief to the needy, unyielding in coming to the defence of the faith, and rigorously strict in upholding the discipline of the Church. 1.4 And to crown the example of virtuous deeds that you have been setting, even now as you confess with your tongue and suffer with your body you are rousing the hearts of your brethren and drawing them forward towards holy martyrdom by showing yourselves guides in courageous action. For the flock, by following its shepherds and imitating what it sees its leaders do, will also be crowned by the Lord and be equally rewarded for similar acts of dutiful obedience.⁶

2.1 First of all, you were severely belaboured and beaten about with clubs; such were the afflictions with which you entered upon the holy beginnings of your confession. However, that is not a matter which we need deplore. For the body of a Christian feels no terror at the sight of clubs, given that all his hopes in fact depend upon wood. Indeed, the servant of Christ discerns in them a holy sign of his salvation: by wood he has been redeemed for life eternal, and by wood he has now been set on his way to win his crown.

2.2 Neither is there cause for surprise that you, being vessels of gold and silver, have been assigned to a mine, that is to say the home of gold and silver. The only difference is that in this instance the role of the mines has been reversed, and places which previously would have ordinarily given up gold and silver have now begun instead to receive them.⁷

2.3 And then they manacled your feet with fetters and bound about those blessed limbs, which are temples of God, with degrading chains—as if, when the body is bound, they could bind the spirit as well, as if your gold could be tarnished by its contact with this iron! But on men dedicated to God, who bear witness to their faith with such devout courage, these things fit not as chains but as ornaments; they do not bring hobbling degradation upon the feet of Christians,

they bring them radiant glory and the prospect of a martyr's crown.⁸ O feet blessedly enchained: no smith can loosen their bonds, only the Lord. O feet blessedly enchained: they are now being guided along the path of salvation that leads to paradise. O feet bound for the time being in this world so that they may be for ever free in the presence of God. O feet lamed for a period by manacles and shackles but which one day will swiftly speed along the paths of glory to their Christ. Let their cruel persecutors in their envy and malice hold them here as fast as they will with their bonds and chains: soon you will be delivered, all the same, from such afflictions on this earth and come to the kingdom of heaven.

2.4 In the mines no bed or pillow gives repose to your body; it enjoys instead repose from the refreshment and solace of Christ. Your flesh, wearied with toil, lies upon the ground, but it is no punishment when you lie down with Christ. Your limbs, unsightly with dirt and dust, go filthy and unwashed; but within you are cleansed in your spirit while without in your flesh you remain foul. The bread given there is meagre; *Man*, however, *does not live by bread alone but by the word of God*. You want for clothing and go shivering, but the man who puts on Christ is abundantly clothed and attired.⁹ Unkempt is the hair on your half-shaven heads, but in the case where Christ is the head of man, anything will be an adornment on a head made illustrious by its adherence to the Name of Christ.¹⁰ 2.5 Think of the splendour you'll receive in compensation for all this squalor which pagans find so loathsome and repulsive. Think of the rewards of radiant and everlasting glory you'll receive in exchange for this brief and transient suffering, when, in the words of the blessed Apostle, *the Lord will transfigure the body belonging to our lowly state and give it a form like that of His own radiant body*.¹¹

3.1 Moreover, dearly beloved brethren, there is no reason why you should regard it as any loss to your faith or piety that in your present circumstances bishops of God are allowed no opportunity for offering and celebrating the divine sacrifices.¹² Remember, you are celebrating and offering a sacrifice to God, and it is a truly precious and glorious sacrifice which will aid you greatly in gaining the recompense of heavenly rewards. As the Holy Scriptures declare in these words: *An afflicted spirit is a sacrifice to God; a heart humbled and broken God does not despise*.¹³ 3.2 This is the sacrifice you are offering

to God, this is the sacrifice you are celebrating without ceasing, night and day. You have become yourselves sacrificial offerings to God, you are presenting yourselves as holy and unspotted victims, you are following the exhortation of the Apostle when he says: *And so, my brothers, I do urge you by God's mercy that you make your very selves into a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Conform no more to the pattern of this world but let your hearts be renewed and yourselves be transformed so that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing to Him and perfect.*¹⁴

4.1 This indeed is what, above all else, is pleasing to God, this is what confers greater efficacy upon our works for earning the goodwill of God, this is what alone, in the service of our faith and religion, we can render as tribute to the Lord in return for His magnificent blessings of salvation, this is what the Holy Spirit proclaims and declares in the Psalms: *What shall I render to the Lord in return for all His blessings towards me? I shall take up the cup of salvation, and I shall call upon the name of the Lord. For precious in the sight of God is the death of His righteous ones.*¹⁵

4.2 Who would not cheerfully and eagerly take up this cup of salvation? Who would not gladly and joyfully strive for this chance to render some personal return to his Lord? Who would not welcome with unflinching courage that death which is precious in the sight of God? For he knows full well he will be pleasing to His eyes as He looks down upon us locked in the battle for His name, regarding us with His favour if we go willingly into the fray: He aids us in our struggle, He crowns us in our victory, and out of His fatherly bounty and goodness He rewards in us whatever He has in fact bestowed Himself and honours in us what He has in effect accomplished Himself.¹⁶

5.1 That the victory we gain belongs to Him and that to Him belongs the overthrow of our enemy as well as the laurels we win for our mighty encounter, the Lord declares and teaches us in His own Gospel. For He says: *When they deliver you up, give no thought as to how or what you are to say; for it shall be granted you at that hour what you are to say. It is not you who speak but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks within you.* And again He says: *Resolve in your hearts not to prepare your defence beforehand, for I shall myself give you power of speech and wisdom which your opponents will be unable to gainsay.*¹⁷ 5.2 In these words lies the great hope of believers, and the greatest fault of unbelievers, for the latter neither believe Him

when He promises He will give His aid to those who confess Him nor do they, on the other hand, stand in fear of Him when He threatens with eternal punishment those who deny Him.

6.1 But by acting as courageous and faithful soldiers of Christ, you have instilled all of these lessons into the hearts of our brethren, fulfilling in deed what you previously taught in word, and being, therefore, destined to become the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. For our Lord has given His promise with these words: *Whoever shall do and teach thus will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*¹⁸ 6.2 In fact, the example you have set has been followed by a numerous band of the faithful: they have confessed along with you, they have been crowned along with you, being linked to you by the bonds of the strongest charity, and suffering neither prison nor mines to prise them apart from their church leaders. Indeed, there are virgins to be found in this company: to their yield of sixtyfold the reward of a hundredfold has now been added, and they have gone forward to receive their crowns thanks to this twofold glory of theirs.¹⁹ Children, too, displaying a courage that surpasses their age, have transcended their youthful years in the honour of their confession. Thus it is that the blessed flock of your martyrs now has every age and sex to adorn it.²⁰

7.1 My dearly beloved brothers, your consciences stand victorious, your spirits invigorated and uplifted, your senses exultant and your hearts triumphant. For each of you now awaits in readiness God's promised reward, without a qualm for the day of judgment;²¹ you walk about in the mine, prisoners to be sure in body but kings in heart, knowing full well that Christ is present with you and that He rejoices to see the endurance of His servants as they follow in His footsteps and along His paths towards the everlasting kingdom. 7.2 You happily live in daily expectation of the blessed day of your departure, ready at any moment now to quit this world and impatient to reach your dwelling place with God and the rewards of your martyrdom. After the darkness of this universe, you are about to behold the most brilliant of light and to receive a glory that outshines all struggles and sufferings. As the Apostle testifies with these words: *The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come which will be revealed in us.*²²

7.3 Clearly now your word has become all the more effectual in supplication, for prayers made in the midst of persecution are an-

swered all the more readily.²³ Ask and pray, therefore, with all the greater fervour that through God's bounty we may, all of us, bring our confession to its completion, that we, too, along with you may be rescued by Him out of this present darkness and the snares of this world, still sound and glorious, that we who have here taken our stand side by side facing the assaults of heretics and the persecutions of pagans, united together by the bonds of charity and peace,²⁴ may together rejoice in the realms of heaven.

I wish that you, most blessed and valiant brothers, may fare well in the Lord and be ever and everywhere mindful of us.²⁵ Farewell.

LETTER 77

*Nemesianus, Dativus, Felix, and Victor send eternal greetings in the Lord to their brother Cyprian.*¹

1.1 Dearly beloved Cyprian, in your letters you never fail to speak with a profound understanding suited to the occasion and the circumstances. By attentive reading of those letters not only are the wicked reformed but men of sound faith are given strength; for as you assiduously lay bare the hidden mysteries of our religion in your writings, you cause us to grow in faith and men of the world to draw closer to believing. 1.2 So much excellent matter have you introduced in your many books² that you have, all unknowingly, portrayed your very self to us. For there is no man your match in teaching, none more eloquent in language, more wise in counsel, more penetrating in wisdom, more generous in charity, more saintly in abstinence, more humble in obedience, more selfless in virtuous conduct. And you are also well aware, dearest brother, that it is our prayerful desire that we should see you, our teacher and our friend, gain your crown for your magnificent confession.

2.1 And acting as that good and true teacher, you first proclaimed before the proconsul's tribunal the words which we, your pupils, following your lead, were to declare before our own provincial governor.³ With that trumpet call you roused the soldiers of God whom you have now furnished with heavenly weapons to engage in

the encounter, and in the front line of battle you slew the devil yourself with your spiritual sword.⁴ With those words of yours you arrayed in due order, on this side and that, the battle lines of your brethren. The foe was thus beset with snares on every side, his sinews were severed, and the very carcass of our common enemy was trampled underfoot.

2.2 And rest assured, dearest brother, that your blameless soul is no less due to receive its reward of one hundredfold.⁵ For you did not flinch before the first assaults of this world, you did not refuse to go into exile, you did not hesitate to leave your city, neither did you shrink from dwelling in some desert place.⁶ Since you have provided many with a model in confession, you have yourself led the vanguard to martyrdom.⁷ How many have you incited, by this example you have set, to become martyrs themselves! And you have thus not only become a companion of those martyrs who are now departing from this world, but you have also cemented fellowship in heaven with those who will one day become martyrs.

3.1 And so, dearest Cyprian, those who have been condemned with us pay you the most heartfelt thanks, for by the letter you sent you have brought fresh strength to our wearied spirits. Our limbs were wounded by the cudgels, and you have healed them; our feet were bound with fetters, and you have released them; our heads were half-shaven and you have restored their hair.⁸ Into the darkness of our dungeon you have brought light, you have levelled the mountains of ore,⁹ to our nostrils you have brought the fragrance of flowers, driving away the noisome stench of the smoke.¹⁰

3.2 Indeed, thanks to your kindly ministrations and those of our cherished Quirinus,¹¹ what you have sent for distribution by the hands of the subdeacon Herennianus and the acolytes Lucanus, Maximus, and Amantius¹² has enabled us to make good all the deficiencies in our bodily needs.

3.3 Let us, then, be through our prayers helpers of one another and let us entreat, as you have bidden, that we may have God and Christ and the angels as our supporters in all our actions.¹³

We wish that you, our most honoured brother,¹⁴ may ever fare well and be mindful of us. Greet all those who are with you.¹⁵ All who are here with us¹⁶ love you and greet you and long to see you.

LETTER 78

*Lucius, along with all the brethren who are with him, sends greetings in God to his brother and colleague Cyprian.*¹

1.1 Dearly beloved brother, your letter which you sent to us by the subdeacon Herennianus and the acolytes Lucanus, Maximus, and Amantius, reached us² while we were still exultant and rejoicing in God because He had not only given us arms for facing the combat, He had, through His grace, even made us victorious in the battle. And reading this letter of yours has eased the burden of our chains, it has brought us solace in our distress and support in our urgent need; we have been fired with fresh vigour and spirit to confront any further punishments that may await us.

1.2 For even before the time of our sufferings you had called us forth to march to glory, you had taken the lead, in advance of us, directing us towards confession of Christ's name. And now, by treading in the footsteps of your confession, we are hopeful of winning a like grace with you. For he who is ahead in the race is also ahead in reaching the prize; and having got hold of it before us, you have now communicated to us a share in what you already have within your grasp.³ This is a clear proof of that indissoluble charity with which you have always loved us, and it will enable all of us, who have kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,⁴ together to enjoy the favour won by your prayers⁵ and to gain one and the same crown for our confession.

2.1 But in your case, dearly beloved brother, in addition to your crown of confession there has now accrued the recompense for your works of mercy—an overflowing measure which you will receive from the Lord on the day of remuneration.⁶ And by your letter you have indeed made yourself present to us,⁷ revealing that innocent and blessed heart of yours as we have ever known it and in the largeness of that heart joining us with you in uttering words of praise to God—not, to be sure, in the measure that we deserve to hear but in the measure that you have the gift to utter. 2.2 For by your words you have fully equipped that which had been imperfectly prepared within us, steeling us with the determination to bear those very suf-

ferings we now bear; but we remain confident of our reward in heaven, of our crown of martyrdom and of the kingdom of God, following that prophecy which you, filled with the Holy Spirit, pledged to us in your letter.⁸ And this will all come to pass, dearest brother, if you are mindful of us in your prayers,⁹ as I trust you are, just as we most certainly are of you.

3.1 And finally, most cherished brother, we have received the contribution which you yourself as well as Quirinus have sent, a sacrifice, like Noah's, made from every clean thing. And just as he offered sacrifice to God and God was pleased with its sweet savour and looked with favour upon his sacrifice,¹⁰ so, too, He looks with favour upon your sacrifice and is pleased to pay you both the reward for so noble a work of mercy. And I ask that you direct that the letter we have written to Quirinus be forwarded to him.¹¹

I wish that you, dearly beloved and most cherished brother, may ever fare well and be mindful of us. Greet all who are with you.¹² Farewell.

LETTER 79

Felix, Iader, and Polianus, in company with the presbyters and all who are with us in the mine at Sigus,¹ send everlasting greetings in God to their dearly beloved and most cherished Cyprian.

1.1 We return your greetings, dearly beloved brother, through Herennianus the subdeacon, Lucanus, and Maximus,² brothers of ours who remain safe and steadfast thanks to the support of your prayers.³ We have received from them the offering of money together with your letter which you sent.⁴ In that letter you deigned to bring comfort to us as if we were your sons, using those inspired words of yours.⁵

1.2 And to God the Father the Almighty we have given thanks through His Christ, and we continue to do so, for the comfort and the renewed vigour we thus have gained from your address to us. And we ask of the goodness of your heart that you deign to remember us in your

constant prayers,⁶ so that the Lord may bring to fulfillment your confession and ours which He has deigned to bestow upon us.

We wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well in the Lord. [I, Felix, wrote this.] I, Iader, have signed this. I, Polianus, have read this.⁷ I send greetings to my honoured friend Eutychianus.⁸

LETTER 80

*Cyprian sends greetings to his brother Successus.*¹

1.1 I did not write to you at once, dearly beloved brother, for the reason that every single one of our clergy, being under the immediate threat of undergoing his contest, has been entirely unable to move from here.² They have all been standing at the ready for divine and heavenly glory, such is the dedication of their hearts.³

But you should now be informed that the men whom I had expressly sent over to Rome are back; they were to find out the truth and report to us the terms of the rescript concerning us,⁴ for there have been rife a wide variety of unconfirmed rumours.

1.2 The truth of the matter stands as follows.

Valerian has sent a rescript to the Senate,⁵ directing that bishops, presbyters, and deacons are to be put to death at once⁶ but that senators, high-ranking officials, and Roman knights are to lose their status as well as forfeit their property,⁷ and that if, after being so dispossessed, they should persist in remaining Christians, they are then to suffer capital punishment as well.⁸ Furthermore, that matrons are to be dispossessed of their property and despatched into exile⁹ and that any members of Caesar's household who had either confessed earlier or should have done so now, are to have their possessions confiscated and are to be sent in chains, assigned to the imperial estates.¹⁰

1.3 Moreover, the emperor Valerian has added to his address¹¹ a copy of the letter which he has written to the governors of the provinces concerning us.¹² We are daily awaiting the arrival of this letter,¹³ resolved as we are to stand in all firmness of faith ready to

endure a martyr's sufferings, for we are confident of gaining a crown of everlasting life through the help and generosity of the Lord.

1.4 You should be further informed that Sixtus was put to death in the Cemetery on August 6,¹⁴ and, along with him, four deacons.¹⁵ Indeed, the prefects in Rome are daily pressing on with this persecution¹⁶: those who are brought before them are being condemned, with their estates forfeited to the imperial treasury.¹⁷

2 I request that you make known these matters to our other colleagues also, so that through their exhortations our brethren may everywhere be strengthened and made ready for this spiritual contest, and that each and every member of our flocks¹⁸ may think not of death but rather of deathless eternity and, being devoted to the service of the Lord with full faith and complete courage, they should not be fearful but rather joyful at this, the hour of their confession, for they know that during it soldiers of God and of Christ are not slain but crowned.

I wish that you, dearly beloved brother, may ever fare well in the Lord.

LETTER 81

*Cyprian sends greetings to the presbyters and deacons and to all the people.*¹

1.1 My dearest brothers, when news was brought to us that police agents had been sent² to take me to Utica,³ very dear friends of mine urged and counselled me to withdraw for the time being from our gardens.⁴ There being adequate grounds for so acting, I have agreed to do this. The reasons are these: it befits a bishop to confess his faith in that city where he has been placed in charge over the Lord's flock, it is proper that the appointed leader in the Church should bring glory upon all his people by making his confession in their midst.

1.2 For whatever a confessor-bishop speaks at the very moment he confesses his faith, he speaks under the inspiration of God⁵ and as the mouthpiece of all.⁶ But, in fact, the honour belonging to our illustrious Church will be vitiated⁷ if it is at Utica that I should receive

sentence upon making my confession (whereas I have been appointed as bishop over another church) and if it is from Utica that I should go forth as martyr to the Lord. For it is in your midst that I ought to be making my confession, it is there I ought to suffer, it is from there I ought to go forth to the Lord. And for this I do entreat and supplicate without ceasing, and I long for it with all my heart, both on my own account and on yours.

1.3 That is why we are now here in this secret retreat awaiting the arrival of the proconsul, who is on his way back to Carthage.⁸ From him we shall be hearing what instructions the emperors have laid down concerning both Christian laity and bishops⁹ and we shall say what it is the Lord's will is to be said at that hour.

1.4 But so far as you are concerned, dearest brothers, you must obey the rules which you have constantly heard from me based on the precepts of the Lord, you must follow the lessons which I have preached and taught to you time and time again. Remain calm and peaceable.¹⁰ Let no one among you stir up any trouble for the brethren or offer himself up to the pagans of his own volition.¹¹ But if a man has been apprehended and delivered up, then he has a duty to speak out, in as much as God who dwells within us speaks at that hour: He has shown that His will is that we should do more than profess our faith; we are to confess it.¹²

1.5 But how we are to comport ourselves in other matters until the proconsul passes sentence upon me for confessing the Name of God, that we shall determine on the spot guided by the Lord's instructions.

May the Lord Jesus, dearest brothers, keep you abiding safe within His Church¹³ and by His grace may He keep you in His protection.

LETTER 82

Cyprian sends greetings in the Lord to Silvanus, Reginus, and Donatianus, my most honoured, sainted, and cherished brethren, who are united to us by the bonds of matchless charity and mutual love.¹

I am filled with the greatest joy and gladness that you are all safe.² The strength of your faith which you have in Christ Jesus remains unshaken. It is a faith which I am aware brings great profit even to me, guilty as I am of a multitude of sins, through the pure and holy prayers which you have sent forth to God on my behalf. I am sure that through them I have been granted pardon by the Lord for my sins.³ And so, through you, I am jubilant and exultant, for you deign to hold me worthy of remembrance in your prayers. Nevertheless, I do find cause for distress, but in one particular only: you disdain to return my greetings by writing to me, faint-hearted creature that I am.⁴ For from your letters I always look forward to gaining spiritual solace and refreshment; I have done so every time you have esteemed it appropriate to make manifest to me, by your writing, the fullness of your affection. For my own part, I shall not pass over any opportunity for writing to you; by this very persistence I can thus remind you to write to me so that by receiving your correspondence I may enjoy the double dividend of practical advantage and of salvation.

Give greetings to our most sainted sisters, the blessed Metucosa and Valeria.⁵ May God watch over both them and you, competitors all in the race of sanctity.⁶ And may He bring you to the fulfilment of your illustrious glory, for thus we may all become the beneficiaries of your prayers when in your case virginity shall be paid its due honour.⁷

I wish that you may fare well and be mindful of me.⁸ Farewell.

NOTES

The text of this volume was completed in 1983. It is regretted that it has not been possible to do full justice to literature that has appeared since that date.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

N.B. Most abbreviations will be readily explained by the Bibliography.

AA.SS.	Acta sanctorum
AB	Analecta Bollandiana
AC	Antike und Christentum
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
AE	L'année épigraphique
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> , ed. H. Temporini
Bayard	L. Bayard, <i>Le latin de saint Cyprien</i> (Paris 1902)
Benson	E. W. Benson, <i>Cyprian, His Life, His Times, His Work</i> (London 1897)
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History
CCL	Corpus christianorum, series latina
CIL	Corpus inscriptionum latinarum
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
DACL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie
DHGE	Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie chrétienne
Dig	Digesta
Duquenne	L. Duquenne, <i>Chronologie des lettres de s. Cyprien. Le dossier de la persécution de Dèce</i> (Brussels 1972)
ET	English translation
Fahey	M. A. Fahey, <i>Cyprian and the Bible: A Study in Third-Century Exegesis</i> (Tübingen 1971)
GCS	Die griechischen christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
Hartel	<i>S. Thasci Caecili Cypriani opera omnia</i> , ed. G. Hartel
H.E.	<i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>

Hefele-Leclercq	C. J. Hefele and H. Leclercq, <i>Histoire des conciles</i> (Paris vol. 1, 1907; vol. 2, 1908)
ICUR	Inscriptiones christianae urbis Romae
IGRR	Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes
ILCV	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres</i> , ed. E. Diehl
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
MEFR	Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école française de Rome
MG	Patrologia graeca, ed. J. P. Migne
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae historica
ML	Patrologia latina, ed. J. P. Migne
Musurillo	H. Musurillo, <i>The Acts of the Christian Martyrs</i> (Oxford 1972)
Nelke	L. Nelke, <i>Die Chronologie der Korrespondenz Cyprians und der pseudocyprianischen Schriften ad Novatianum und Liber de rebaptismate</i> (diss. Thorn 1902)
PIR ²	Prosopographia imperii romani (2nd ed.)
PW	Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, <i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
REAug	Revue des études augustinienes
RechAug	Recherches augustinienes
TLL	Thesaurus linguae latinae
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VC	Vigiliae christianae
Watson	E. W. Watson, "The Style and Language of St. Cyprian," <i>Studia biblica</i> 4 (1896) 189 ff.
ZfKT	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie
ZNTW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

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INTRODUCTION

1. For bibliography on the joint reigns of Valerian and Galienus, see Walser and Pekáry, *Die Krise* 28 ff. combined with Christol, ANRW 2.2 (1975) 803 ff.

2. See Honoré, *Emperors and Lawyers* 93 ff. On the chronology Pekáry, *Historia* 9 (1962) 124 ff.

3. Compare the recent case of Philip, *Cod. Iust.* 9.51.7 (*generalis indulgentia nostra redditum exsulibus seu deportatis tribuit*).

4. Note the survey by Scardigli in ANRW 2.5.1 (1976) 241 ff.

5. Valerian may well have made *two* journeys eastwards, one in autumn 254 (returning some 12 months later) and the other in early 257, but the chronological controls (provided largely by the place from which imperial ordinances were issued) are not absolute. For a different view on the chronology see J.-P. Rey-Coquais, JRS 68 (1978) 58 f.

6. This enabled Dionysius of Alexandria to pass his celebrated (but tendentious) remarks on the benevolence of these opening years of Valerian's reign: "Not a single one of the emperors before him was so kindly and favourably disposed towards them [i.e. the men of God]—not even those said to have been openly Christians—as he manifestly was when he received them at the beginning in the most intimate and friendly manner: indeed all his house was filled with godly people and was a church of God" (*ap. Euseb. H.E.* 7.10.3).

7. Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* affords valuable illustrative vignettes of cultural life in Rome at this season with "not a few members of the Senate" attending Plotinus' lectures and devoted followers flocking in from all around the Mediterranean: note especially *Vit. Plot.* 7 ff.

8. Despite the assertions of Aurelius Victor *De Caes.* 33.3: *Fran-corum gentes direpta Gallia Hispaniam possiderent vastato ac paene direpto Tarraconensium oppido*; cf. Eutrop. 9.8: *Germani usque ad Hispaniam penetraverunt et civitatem nobilem Tarraconem expugnaverunt*; Orosius

7.22: *Germani ulteriores abrasa potiuntur Hispania . . . nos quoque in Hispania Tarraconem nostram ad consolationem miseriae recentis ostendimus*. For recent discussion see S. J. Keay in *The Roman West in the Third Century* 451 ff.

9. For a recent summary of the accumulative evidence for Britain, M. Todd, *Roman Britain* 193 ff.; and see B. Levick, *Roman Colonies* 163 ff., on Pisidia.

10. Note Basil *Ep.* 70 MG 32.436. The dating (254) proposed by L. de Blois, *Talanta* 6 (1975) 19 f., does not persuade; see Kettenhofen, *Die römisch-persischen Kriege* 117 ff. Note that 12,000 Jews alone are said to have been slain in Firmilian's city of Caesarea during the Persian assault on the Cappadocian capital: *Talmud Bab. Mo'ed Qatan* 26a, tr. H. M. Lazarus in ed. I. Epstein, part 2, vol. 4, and see further Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia* 2.45 ff.

11. For the evidence for all this, see Euseb. *H.E.* 7.2–10 (adding the Syriac fragments [attributed to the letter to Stephen], most conveniently found with translation and commentary in Feltoe's edition, 45 ff., and the Armenian fragments [attributed to the letter to Stephen and to the first and third letters to Sixtus], translated by Conybeare in *Eng. Hist. Rev.* 25 [1910] 112 ff.).

12. Texts most readily accessible in Hartel 3.3.69 ff. and 3.1.435 ff.

13. For discussion see *Ep.* 70 n. 4.

14. See on this latter point especially Bévenot, *Hey. Journ.* 19 (1978) 123 ff.

15. See *Ep.* 70.2.1 ff: Stephen is lectured by the African bishops in no uncertain terms that clergy reconciled from heresy are not to retain their clerical rank.

16. See n. 6 above for Dionysius' (contentious) version of this period. For fuller accounts of this persecution, see Grégoire et al., *Les persécutions* 47 ff.; Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution* 421 ff.; and the very useful notes by J. Moreau, *Lactance: De la mort des persécuteurs* 2.217 ff. (SC 39).

17. A. Alföldi, CAH 12.205, surmises that Valerian "with a whole series of defeats to his discredit" may have sought to deflect popular indignation away from himself and onto the Christians. De Blois, however, *Talanta* 6 (1975) 7 ff., reconstructs that Valerian had been enjoying a series of successes in 257. The celebration of titles

and victories (*Restitut[or] Orientis*, *Victoria Part[hica]*, etc.) provides at best ambiguous testimony—do they disguise disappointed aspirations or record achieved successes? At all events, the initial measures against Christians do not appear designed specifically for stirring up “popular indignation” against them. (One can more simply imagine that in the more heavily Christian East abstention by prominent Christians from public religious ceremonies designed to win favourable military campaigns for Valerian could have roused the reaction of Valerian and his advisers: cf. Lact. *De mort. persec.* 10 f. Unfortunately no reliance can be placed on the testimony of Dionysius *ap. Euseb. H.E.* 7.11.4—the source was the religious fanaticism of the [now discredited] Macrianus.) For two recent studies of Valerian’s motivation see Haas, *Church History* 52 (1983) 133 ff., and Sage, *Wiener Studien* 17 (1983) 137 ff.

18. Compare the simplified but essentially the same version in the governor’s words reported to Bishop Fructuosus and his deacons in *Act. Fruct.* 2.3 Musurillo 178: *Praecepunt [imperatores] deos coli*. For further discussion of these *Acta*, see *Ep.* 77 n. 3; and see Freudenberger in *Donum gentilicium* 238 ff., esp. on *Romanas caerimonias recognoscere*.

19. Note the close paraphrase of and commentary on this verbal exchange in Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 17 H.CVIII; and for the relationship between Pont. *Vit. Cyp.*, esp. in its latter half, and *Mart. Perpetuae*, see Aronen, VC 38 (1984) 67 ff.

20. Details from *Act. procons. Cyp.* 2 and 5 Musurillo 170 ff. On Cyprian’s subsequent cultus see *Ep.* 81 n. 7.

21. Should the trial of Marinus (Euseb. *H.E.* 7.15) be added? Though Eusebius firmly dates this afterwards, to the time of the Church’s peace, the narrative mentions emperors (plural).

22. Even in *Act. Montan. et Luc.* 21.3 Musurillo 234 the success of Cyprian’s martyrdom appears to have blocked out the memory of other Carthaginian martyrs (“At the time when our bishop Cyprian was still our only martyr”).

LETTER 67

Contents: The 37 African bishops, assembled together, have received letters, via the bishops Felix and Sabinus, from the two Spanish communities of Legio-and-Asturica and Emerita, telling them of the lapse and other grievous sins of Basilides and Martialis. Now God has made clear in the Old Testament the manner of men who may minister at His altar: if their prayers are to be heard, they must be without blemish. Otherwise the people will be infected by their sinful contagion. The people, therefore, must be present to scrutinise candidates for episcopal office (a rule the apostles themselves observed), along with neighbouring bishops. This rule was followed when Sabinus was appointed to replace the sinful Basilides—and no deception of Stephen in Rome by Basilides can invalidate that appointment; it can only add to Basilides' sins. And Basilides is not only tainted by his idolatrous certificate, he is guilty of blasphemy as well, whereas Martialis, in addition to his sin of idolatry, has participated in the scandalous banquets of a pagan club, has had his sons buried among heathens, and has publicly abjured Christ. Such men, Cornelius and all the bishops of the world have decreed, may be admitted to penitence but they must be debarred from clerical office. Some may weakly give way before such wickedness and be rash enough to be in communion with Basilides and Martialis. Such moral infirmity is only to be expected in these Last Days, and those who succumb to it and recognize Basilides and Martialis as bishops must be contaminated by their contact with the sinful. The Spanish brethren are therefore exhorted to continue to maintain the integrity of their stand.

Date and circumstances: The letter falls within the pontificate of Stephen (§5.3), whose dates are generally agreed to be from spring (about mid-May) 254 until the beginning of August 257 (e.g. Turner, JTS 17 (1915/16) 347 f.; Duchesne, *Liber pontificalis* CCXLVIII, CCLX). Within that pontificate time has to be allowed for Basilides to journey to Rome, there make his appeal to Stephen (§5.3) and to return to Spain, and then for the joint Spanish delegation, in reaction, to be organized and make its way to Carthage (§§1.1, 6.1). A

date from (at the very earliest) autumn 254 onwards becomes, therefore, possible for this document. Thereafter controls are slightly apart from two factors: (i) we must be at a season when 37 African bishops might assemble together (normally spring, but, in one attested case at least, autumn [256]); and (ii) neither do the names of the attending bishops coincide with those of the Council of *Ep.* 70 (?spring 255), nor does the number coincide with that of the Council of 71 mentioned in *Ep.* 73.1.2 f. (?spring 256). *Prima facie* it would make sense, when we are dealing with cases of lapse that date from 250 or early 251 (§§1.1, 6.1), that the events of this letter should be placed earlier rather than later within Stephen's pontificate (Basilides hoping to win better favour from a freshly elected pope?). On the other hand, the list of the attending bishops and the sharpish tone in the document towards Stephen (§§5.3 f., cf. §§9.1 f.) would be quite consistent with a later dating (e.g. autumn 256 or even spring 257: see n. 1 below); in that case Basilides (and Martialis) may have arrived at the judgment that they had at length rendered sufficient satisfaction for their sins (§§6.1 f.) and were accordingly ready for reinstatement, only within the course of Stephen's pontificate. A more definite conclusion is not possible. See for further discussion and bibliography n. 1 below.

The letter provides testimony of importance on several counts:

(1) It reveals the basic electoral procedures, perceived by the African bishops to be almost universally observed and to be divinely ordained, for the appointment of a new bishop; the role of the local congregation is regarded as crucial in the selection process (§§5.1 f., where see n. 15).

(2) It brings into sharp focus the characteristic Cyprianic view that church ministers must themselves be "sound and without blemish" (§2.2). Otherwise, not only will their prayers not be heard (§2.2) but the congregation which joins in prayer with them shares in their corruption (§3.2), and bishops who unite themselves in communion with such sinners will just as certainly remain united with them in punishment (§9.2); no compromise can be countenanced with the fatal contagion carried by sinful ministers. The African bishops assume that their Spanish brethren share in this purist sacramental view (and they have had appearing before them two Spanish bishops who,

clearly, did not demur); this sacramental theology was not exclusively "Cyprianic."

(3) The precise relationship between the provincial churches and Rome is brought into serious question. Basilides was at pains to go all the way over to Rome to seek support for his attempt at reinstatement; the Spanish communities, disturbed by the success of his deceptive mission, appeal to the African bishops for countervailing assistance. These churches place great weight upon episcopal approval in the world about them—and Roman approval counts for much (cf. n. 18 below). But the African bishops' view is unequivocal: to the local community belongs the power to select their own bishop, and the sacred duty to depose him if he is ungodly (§§3.2 ff.). The guilt will be theirs if they continue in communion with an unworthy bishop (§3.1).

(4) This letter provides precious testimony for the early history of the Spanish Church; indeed, it allows us for the first time to glimpse, although only in partial light, the full establishment of Spanish Christian communities. For previous notices are but general and jejune, lacking in any detail. St. Paul, notoriously, projected a visit to Spain (Rom. 15.24, 28) which later documents understood to have been realized (Clem. *Ad Cor.* 5.7 SC 167.108, Murat. Canon 11.37 ff. [Buchanan, JTS 9 (1907) 541], Jerome *Comment. in cap. xi Isai.* ML 24.151, and see further Rougé, *Cab. d'hist.* 12 (1967) 239 ff.). Iren. *Adv. haer.* 1.10.2 MG7.553 and Tert. *Adv. Jud.* 7.4 CCL 1.2.1354 (*Hispaniarum omnes termini*) can both include the provinces of Spain as witnesses to the wide spread of the one faith, marking as they did the western limits of the inhabited world. But now, at last, we are able to view some particulars: bishoprics are attested as established up in the N.W. (Legio-and-Asturica) as well as down in the S.W. (Emerita), with a further community at Caesaraugusta towards the N.E. of the Peninsula. Not only that. It can be claimed that at the appointment of Sabinus as bishop the custom was followed of having neighbouring, comprovincial bishops (*episcopi eiusdem provinciae proximi quique*) either present themselves or with their views represented by letter (§§5.1 f.). A number of further bishoprics can therefore be safely conjectured as having been by now established in order to accommodate this assertion (with certitude, at least, for Tar-

raco: see n. 21 below). Indeed, that three so widely separated communities as those named in this letter can be found acting together (opposed by other bishops—*aliqui de collegis nostris*, §9.1) suggests that the Spanish churches have by now well-developed lines of communication among themselves—and very probably they have met together from time to time in some form of provincial synod, convened to discuss communal issues (cf. n. 2 below and *Letters of Cyprian* 3 ACW 46, intro. p. 27).

It was natural that these Spanish churches should turn to North Africa for religious counsel. There is not only close geographical proximity but abundant culture contact and commercial linkage between the two areas—indeed, many have argued for an African origin of Spanish Christianity. At least we can reasonably claim that the tone of this document implies that a visit from Spanish brethren was no cause for surprise to African Christians: this is not the first time that Spanish and African Christians have been in communication with each other across the Western Mediterranean. For African-Spanish interchange see e.g., Díaz y Díaz, in *Las raíces de España* 423 ff.; Blázquez, *Arch. esp. de arch.* 40 (1967) 30 ff.; Quasten, *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 35 (1942) 213 ff.; and for further bibliography Blázquez, *Hispania* 28 (1968) 17; and for the (early) introduction of the cult of Saint Cyprian into Spain, see C. García Rodríguez, *El culto de los santos en la España* 185 ff.

For further discussion of this letter in the context of early Spanish Christianity, see the monograph by García de la Fuente (1933) and idem, *Relig. y cult.* 27 (1934) 123 f. (on the authenticity of the letter); Z. García Villada, *Historia eclesiástica de España* 1.191 ff.; H. Leclercq, *L'Espagne chrétienne* 25 ff. (esp. 49 ff.), *DACL* 5 (1922) s.v. "Espagne" 407ff. (H. Leclercq), A. Ferrua, *Civiltà Cattolica* 19 (1940), 423 ff. *DHGE* 15 (1963) s.v. "Espagne" 894 ff. (J. Fernández Alonso); (ed.) R. García Villoslada, *Historia de la Iglesia en España* 1 (1979) 35 ff., esp. 42 ff.; F. Martínez Bouzas, *Revist. espag. de teología* 35 (1975) 3 ff.; M. C. Díaz y Díaz, *Class. Fol.* 32 (1978) 243 ff.; L. García Iglesias in *Historia de España Antigua* 2 (1978) 651 ff., Fischer, *Zeit. für Kircheng.* 93 (1982) 223 ff.

1. All of the 37 bishops who send this letter reappear among the 87 names of the Council of Sept. 1, 256—if the sixth bishop (here

recorded as Lucilianus) is to be equated with the Lucianus (variant reading, Lucilianus) of *Sent. episc.* 43 H. 451; cf. Y. Duval, MEFR 96 (1984) 502. Certainly the bishops' order of appearance here is more than somewhat dislocated from that list of 256; compared with that catalogue, the present bishops figure as numbers 87 (= Cyprian), 1, 2, 3, 9, 43, 16, 18, 17, 6 [= Ianuarius], 11 [= Secundinus], 48, 77, 40 [= Victor], 41 [= Aurelius], 39, 72, 23 [= alius Ianuarius], 51 [= Saturninus], 81 [= alius Aurelius], 49, 27, 60, 67, 12 [= Felix], 58, 65 [= alius Saturninus], 7 [= Lucius], 37, 30, 59, 53, 42, 35, 25, 47 (more than one bishop was present at the meeting of 256 bearing a name here appearing in square brackets; I have given the earliest occurrence in order, but a somewhat less erratic place-list might be feasibly reached). But it would be a sensible surmise, all the same, on the basis of the correlation of these names, if (say) the letter from Spain (§1.1) reached Carthage towards the close of the business of the Council in the autumn of 256 when about half of the delegates may have already started on their way homewards; these remaining 37 bishops were hastily reconvened and they alone stayed on to draft this reply in response to this late item of business. They are not clearly regional in composition (cf. von Soden, *Prosopographie* 254 f.).

This construction must remain but a convenient and attractive conjecture; nevertheless, sheer coincidence between these names and those of September 256 (reinforced by the frequency of homonyms) must formally remain another possibility. Other dates are therefore not to be excluded as also feasible. E.g. spring 257 (otherwise unattested) is a distinct possibility, while others prefer a date much earlier in Stephen's pontificate (e.g. autumn 254 is generally favoured—also otherwise unattested and requiring a fairly brisk but not impossible timetable). Against the earlier dating, however, is the rather tart and unguarded reference to the relative culpability of Stephen's negligent ignorance, §§5.3 f. (e.g. *neque enim tam culpandus est ille cui neglegenter obreptum est quam hic . . .*). This is uncharacteristic of Cyprian's usual diplomatic tact. For Cyprian must expect such a conciliar letter to reach Stephen's hands at least indirectly; as likely as not, he was in fact to be sent a copy for his information, directly. We should conclude that relations are, by the time of writing, somewhat cold and strained between the two:

the tone is less than cordial (cf. the harsh but indirect rebuke in §9.1 f.). That consideration suits a later rather than earlier context for this document. More decisive one cannot be.

Among the many discussions on the chronology are Nelke, *Chronologie* 136 ff.; Benson 312; Ritschl, *De epist.* 41 f.; von Soden, *Briefsammlung* 31; Harnack, *Chronologie* 2.348 f.; Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.45, 54, and idem, *Rev. d'hist. et de philol.* 24 (1900) 337; Batiffol, *Église naissante* 450 f.; Turner, *Studies* 130 f. n. 2; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 28; Alföldy, *Historia* 22 (1973) 488 f. n. 51. D'Alès, *Rev. des quest. hist.* 81 (1907) 356, suggests the improbable date of "vers janvier 255."

2. *Felici presbytero et plebibus consistentibus ad Legionem et Asturicae item Aelio diacono et plebi Emeritae consistentibus.* The present bishops of these two dioceses have come to Carthage personally bearing with them letters of appeal (requesting solace or assistance) from their communities (see next n.). Hence the two clerics (addressed nominatim in this reply) are presumed to have been left behind in charge. The later Council of Elvira clearly envisaged such delegation of authority as standard, e.g. can. 32 (*cogente tamen infirmitate necesse est presbyterem communionem praestare debere, et diaconem si ei iusserit sacerdos*) and can. 77 (*si quis diaconus regens plebem sine episcopo vel presbytero aliquos baptizaverit . . .*), Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.238, 261 f. (on deacons in the early Spanish Church, see Alonso, *La cara pastoral en la España* 35 ff.). Compare "Sanctus the deacon from Vienne" *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.1.17 (Lyons and Vienne), perhaps implying a similar *diaconus regens* (so Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*² 1, 41)? Does the fact that a *deacon* is left in charge at Emerita suggest that the community there was small—or have the presbyters (or presbyter) from the town accompanied the bishop on this delegation?

On the early Christian community and antiquities of Emerita (= Augusta Emerita, modern Mérida [Badajoz], in the S.W. of the Iberian peninsula in the Roman province of Lusitania, situated at the confluence of the Guadiana and the Albarregas), see DACL 11 (1933) s.v. Mérida 460 ff. (H. Leclercq), and on the history and remains of the town generally see *Princ. Encyc. Class. Sites* s.v. Augusta Emerita 114 ff. (I. G. Iglesias). Asturica (= Asturica Augusta, modern Astorga) and Legio (= modern León) are towns 47 km. apart in the far N.W. of Tarraconensis [Gallaecia]; on their Christian antiquities see

DACL 1.2 (1907) *s.v.* Astorga 3003 ff. (H. Leclercq) and DHGE 4 (1930) *s.v.* Astorga 1200 ff. (A. Lambert), and on their history and remains generally *Princ. Encyc. Class. Sites s.v.* Asturica-Augusta 105 (J. M. Blázquez) and *s.v.* Legio 495 (R. Teja). The largest known early Christian church of the peninsula is in fact to be found at León: T. Hauschild in *Legio VII Gemina* (1970) 511 ff. Quintana in *Legio VII Gemina* (1970) 446 ff. discusses the phenomenon of the joint diocese of Legio-and-Asturica.

That Christian communities to be found, as the crow flies, some 400 km. apart can act together in concert suggests a fair degree of cohesion and organized communication between the Spanish churches—and these communities can send their delegates over to Africa armed with a supporting document that emanates from a third community, Caesaraugusta (§6.1), situated at least another 400 km. from either (indeed, considerably further from Emerita). There is no suggestion, however, that the delegates have come as emissaries from a Spanish Council; indeed, they have to face the opposition of other bishops (§9.1). The first securely attested Spanish Council comes in fact early in the next century, when (despite uncertainties over the signatories) Legio, Emerita, and Caesaraugusta were all three certainly represented: cf. Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.214 f., DACL 4 (1921) *s.v.* Elvire (Concile d') 2687 ff. (H. Leclercq).

On the unsatisfactory text of the *salutatio* here, see Saxer, REAug 31 (1977) 58 f. n. 5.

3. *litteras vestras . . . quas ad nos per Felicem et Sabinum coepiscopos nostros . . . fecistis*. It is reasonable to deduce that Felix and Sabinus have personally come to Carthage; cf. §6.1, where their personal declarations can be recorded (*ut Felix et Sabinus . . . adseverant*). Are we to suppose that they timed their visit aware of the date set for this African Council? It is also reasonable to deduce that as Sabinus replaced Basilides (§5.2), Felix is the replacement for Martialis (though this is nowhere directly asserted). There is a remarkable divergence of opinion about the identification of the sees of Basilides/Sabinus and Martialis/Felix. Basilides is assigned Legio-and-Asturica (and Martialis, therefore, Emerita) by *inter alios* Benson 233; Telfer, *Office* 100; Frend, *Martyrdom* 419; Díaz y Díaz, *Les raices* 435; Schönaich, *Die Libelli* 7; H. Leclercq, *L'Espagne chrétienne* 50 (cf. DACL 11 [1933] *s.v.* Mérida 463); DHGE 4 (1930) *s.v.* Astorga 1201 (A. Lambert); F.

Martínez Bouzas, *Revist. espag. de teología* 35 (1975) 5. On the other hand, the contradictory assignment is made by (among others) Heffele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 2.2.1241; Bardy, *Paul de Samosate* 312 (cf. idem, *Vie spirituelle* 60 [1939] 111, and *Rech. sc. relig.* 14 [1924] 255); Giles, *Documents* 64. Only occasionally has an agnostic note of caution been sounded, e.g. by Watkins, *Penance* 1.211 ("it cannot be determined from Cyprian's epistle who was the bishop of which see"), likewise Z. Garcia Villada, *Historia ecclesiastica de España* 1, 191 ff.; A. Ferrua, *Civiltà cattolica* 91 (1940) 423 n. 5; (ed.) R. Garcia Villoslada, *Historia de la Iglesia en España* 1.45. That, on the evidence available to me, seems to be the only prudent attitude to adopt (cf. *Latomus* 30 [1971] 1142 ff.).

Observe that right from the start the African bishops register firmly their attitude to the dispute: Felix and Sabinus are termed unequivocally *coepiscopos nostros*.

4. *Basilidem et Martialem libellis idolatriae conmaculatos et nefandorum facinorum conscientia vinctos episcopatum gerere et sacerdotium Dei administrare non oportere*. Basilides and Martialis are *libellatici*, i.e. they obtained certificates during the persecution of Decius which testified that they had duly conformed with Decius' orders to sacrifice, but they did not actually sacrifice themselves (see *Letters of Cyprian* 1, ACW 43, pp. 26–30, 32–33.). The additional *facinora* which burden their consciences are alluded to in §6.2. On the words *episcopatus* and *sacerdotium*, cf. *Ep.* 43 n. 10, *Ep.* 65 n. 4, *Ep.* 66 n. 20; the latter word neatly prepares for the first biblical citation to be given in §1.2 (*sacerdotes qui accedunt . . .*).

5. *iustam pariter ac necessariam sollicitudinem vestram vel solacio vel auxilio nostrae sententiae sublevare*. This present letter (to be taken back by Felix and Sabinus?) discharges the request for *solacium* and *auxilium*, for supportive consolation, by spelling out the principles of sacerdotal worthiness and appointment (§§1.2–5.1) and the faithful application of those principles to the particular cases of Basilides and Martialis, Sabinus and Felix (§§5.2–6.3), and then by exhorting the two churches to continue firmly to stand by those principles, which they have indeed so applied (§§7 ff.). Doubtless it was envisaged that this statement from the collective North African bishops would be circulated among the two communities to reinforce their determination to resist opposing pressures. Is it conceivable that a delegation

went also to Gaul, their other provincial neighbour, to solicit similar support?

6. Exod. 19.22 and 30.20 f. (Fahey 75), plus Lev. 21.17 (Fahey 82)—all three texts found quoted together in *Ep.* 65.2.1 and again in *Ep.* 72.2.2. On Cyprian's use of Exodus and Leviticus to illustrate the N.T. priesthood, see Zell, *Stud. patr.* 11 (1972) 285 ff.

7. Isa. 29.13 (Fahey 201) and Mk. 7.9 (Fahey 333 f.)—both texts found quoted together in *Ep.* 63.14.2 and again in *Ep.* 74.3.1 f.

8. Jn. 9.31, Fahey 389. The bishops have talked of the prayers which the *sacerdotes* make *pro plebis dominicae incolumitate*. Brightman in Swete's *Essays* 384 interprets this narrowly as referring to the commemoration of the dead in the sacrifice for their repose, but quite unnecessarily.

9. Hos. 9.4 (Fahey 243 f.) followed by Num. 16.26 (Fahey 84 f.)—a pair of texts also quoted in *Ep.* 69.9.1 f.

10. *quando ipsa maxime habeat potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes vel indignos recusandi*. Cyprian fails to make explicit the mechanics whereby the *plebs* might depose an unworthy bishop. In the present cases, in fact, it would appear that the bishoprics had been vacated voluntarily when the bishops submitted themselves to penitence (§§6.2—asserted specifically of Basilides). In other closely contemporary cases, however, we see more the action of neighbouring and comprovincial bishops than of local *plebs* (e.g. the *sacrificati* Iovinus and Maximus condemned by nine colleagues and then excommunicated by the full African Council of 251, *Ep.* 59.10.2, where see n. 50—though, for all we know, these deposition proceedings may have been *initiated* by the local congregations). In the present context the African bishops lay such stress on the paramount powers of the laity, for the *plebs* have in fact now to face *episcopal* opposition to the depositions that have been effected (§9.1). In their apology for *popular* elections and depositions, the bishops omit any word of the *clerus* as a separate category. For a useful survey of the history of the deposition of bishops, see Vacanard, *Rev. clerg. fr.* 55 (1908) 388 ff. and cf. Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 2.2.1240 ff. ("Notes pour l'histoire du droit d'appel").

11. Num. 20.25 f., Fahey 86.

12. Acts 1.15, Fahey 408 f. The text here (*fuit autem turba in uno*) unusually breaks off in mid-sentence, giving a misleading sense (but

one that is apposite for the present argument); the complete text runs instead "there was a crowd altogether [of about 120]." Watson 313 claims of Cyprianic usage "*Discens* for *discipulus* seems to be absent"; but the text here has *in medio discentium*.

Observe that Judas, being an apostle, is implicitly regarded as having been a bishop (*de ordinando in locum Judae episcopo*); for this view, regular in Cyprian, cf. *Ep.* 3 n. 16, *Ep.* 66 n. 17, and on this passage see further van Beneden, *Aux origines* 69 f.

13. *nec hoc in episcoporum tantum et sacerdotum, sed in diaconorum ordinationibus* etc. The language here seems to envisage *episcopi* and *sacerdotes* in one group. *diaconi* in another. On the face of it, we would appear to have the most promising example in the Cyprianic corpus of *sacerdos* used in the sense of *presbyter* (cf. Vilela, *Condition collégiale* 283: "ici la suite de la phrase indique clairement les évêques, les prêtres et les diacres"; van Beneden, *Aux origines* 107 n. 110: "*Sacerdotum* prend la place de *presbyterorum*, ce qui est rare chez Cyprien," and see *ibid.* 110 n. 115). But appearances may be deceptive. For in the absence of an unequivocal instance to the contrary (see *Ep.* 40 n. 6 for another problematical use of *sacerdos* = ?*presbyter*), we could just as readily construe *episcopi* and *sacerdotes* as synonyms given for the sake of rhetorical amplitude and, therefore, emphasis: i.e. the processes of public scrutiny apply equally to the very highest dignity of priestly bishop (*sacerdos*) or overseer (*episcopus*) as they do to the relatively menial station of deacon or assistant servant. Two only contrasting classes need therefore figure here, singled out to illustrate the general application of the proper appointment procedures for clerics. Hence in what immediately follows only two classes of unworthy appointment are considered: those who illegitimately make their way *ad altaris ministerium* (= deacon?) *vel ad sacerdotalem locum* (= bishop?). After all, Cyprian could find no formal record of the apostolic appointment of *presbyters* as he can, in the Acts of the Apostles, of Matthias (bishop) and of the Seven (deacons).

For a clear general discussion, see Bévenot JTS 30 (1979) 421 ff. ("Did Cyprian refer to *presbyteri* as *sacerdotes*?"), who concludes (423): "We are justified, then, in saying that when Cyprian speaks of Christian 'sacerdotes' he always means the bishops (*episcopi*)"; and cf. Watson 258 f. n. 1, and Saxer, *Vie liturgique* 85 f. n. 59; Renaud, *Eucharistie* 121 ff., esp. 123 n. 76.

Some have taken this passage to imply that on the analogy of this gathering of the twelve apostles Cyprian insisted that at least 12 provincial bishops should be present at an episcopal consecration. Were this so, we would certainly expect mention of this special number in other contexts (and the evidence of *Ep.* 56.1.1 and n. 3 ad loc. militates directly against such a deduction). A century and a half later, however, at the Carthaginian Council of 397 we find that it had been urged that there be such a quorum: *et illud nobis mandatum est, ut . . . non nisi a duodecim censeatis episcoporum celebrari ordinationes*, can. 39, Jonkers, *Acta et symbola* 129 f. = CCL 149.45; and see further Zmire, *RechAug* 7 (1971) 19.

14. Hos. 8.4, Fahey 243 f. In *Ep.* 66.1.2 (defending his own appointment to office) Cyprian voiced a very strong line that bishops could not be appointed without the will of God, and that the will of God would not allow unworthy men to be appointed. Now, with manifestly unsatisfactory appointees to reckon with, the argument is phrased with greater caution, though there is no tangible evidence given to show that the appointment procedures for Basilides and Martialis had been, in fact, defective in any particular. For further comment see *Ep.* 66 n. 5, and cf. van Beneden, *Aux origines* 80.

15. *diligenter de traditione divina et apostolica observatione servandum est . . . quod apud nos quoque et fere per provincias universas tenetur* etc. Divine teaching that the *plebs* should be present at the investiture of *sacerdotes* has been adduced in §4.1; apostolic observation of that teaching has been exemplified, to the bishops' satisfaction, in §4.2 (appointment of Matthias in the presence of the disciples). For the growing insistence at this period that church practices should be traceable to apostolic traditions, see Mitros, *Theol. Stud.* 29 (1968) 444 ff. esp. 464 ff. (and cf. *Ep.* 63.9 ff.). Observe the assumption that the basis of church organization is by *provinces*, though within them some regional variations (e.g. the traditions of Alexandria?) are to be expected (*fere per provincias universas*); it implies a view of Christianity that is centred on the Roman Empire, and indeed on Roman divisions of administration. For the observation of these electoral procedures in practice (esp. the gathering of *episcopi eiusdem provinciae proximi quique*), see *Ep.* 44 n. 7, *Ep.* 55.8.4 (with n. 35 ad loc.), *Ep.* 56.1.1 (with n. 3), *Ep.* 59.5.2 (and n. 19), with further examples and literature there cited. Cyprian happens nowhere to stress or cite the number of

comprovincial episcopal witnesses present at his own appointment; rather it is the enthusiastic approval of *populus* (e.g. *Ep.* 59.6.1) or *plebs* (e.g. Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 5 H.xcv f.) that is given emphasis. See further, on this role of the *plebs*, *Ep.* 38 n. 1; and for more detailed analysis of this present passage, van Beneden, *Aux origines* 74 ff. For later evidence in the early Spanish Church for the continuance of these observations in episcopal elections, see Alonso, *La cura pastoral en la España* 56 f.

16. *quique de eo ad vos litteras fecerant*. For these customary letters of approbation sent in by local prelates unable to be present themselves at the *ordinatio*, see *Ep.* 56 n. 4. Such letters are distinguishable from the letters of communion or recognition (*formatae*) which were written in by (more distant) fellow bishops *after* the installation had been formally completed, on which see *Ep.* 44 n. 12.

Observe that the consecration ceremony included the imposition of hands (*manus ei in locum Basilidis inponeretur*). See *Ep.* 49.1.4 (Cornelius) for a parallel in the quotation drawn from the recantation of the Novatianising confessors, and cf. Cornelius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.9 (Novatian compelled his consecrators by force "to give him a bishop's office by a counterfeit and vain laying on of hands"). For the ceremonial involved, Hippol. *Apost. Trad.* (Botte² 40 ff.); and for literature on the topic, see *Ep.* 49 n. 10.

17. *crimina . . . conscientiae etiam propriae confessione nudata*. Despite the superficial appearance of the language here, this has nothing to do with the confession of sin contemplated (cf. *De laps.* 28 CCL 3.236: *confitentes exomologesin conscientiae faciunt*) but with the public avowal of sin committed (explicated in §6.2). See Hübner, *ZfKT* 84 (1962) 184 f., for discussion of this passage.

18. *Stephanum . . . gestae rei ac veritatis ignarum fefellit, ut exam-biret reponi se iniuste in episcopatum de quo fuerat iure depositus*. The deposed (and, indeed, excommunicated) Privatus of Numidia sent a delegate to Rome "fraudulently seeking to elicit letters" (*fraudulenter litteras a nobis elicere curaret*), but, the fraudulence detected, he failed to obtain "the letters which he was after" (*litteras quas volebat*), *Ep.* 36.4.2 (where see nn. 18–20). We simply do not know what negotiations transpired between Stephen and Basilides; we can merely imagine that in a similar way to Privatus, Basilides sought (this time successfully) to elicit some such supportive document from Rome,

for, in Cyprian's view, he contrived to keep Stephen ignorant of the relevant facts (*gestae rei ac veritatis ignarum*). Armed with his *litterae ecclesiasticae communicatoriae* or the like which he thus obtained (cf. Counc. Arles, can. 7, 9, Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.284 f., 287; Counc. Elvira, can. 25, 58, *ibid.* 234 f., 253 f.), Basilides then returned to Spain to lay claim to his old see. (Cf. the mission of Felicissimus to Rome in 252, when he sought, similarly, recognition from Rome for Fortunatus as the rightful bishop of Carthage, *Ep.* 59). The reaction of Basilides' opponents, in the face of his present claims, is now to elicit for themselves a supportive document, this letter, from another major see, viz. Carthage, in order to counteract Basilides' attempted usurpation.

The role of Rome in all this has been much discussed. Cyprian does not at all dispute the right of Stephen to concern himself with such cases—only that he has gravely misjudged this particular case. (As he is to say on the Gallic affair in *Ep.* 68.1.2: *cui rei nostrum est consulere et subvenire*.) But, by the same token, Cyprian is equally prepared to embroil himself in such cases, too (as the African bishops are now doing), and the support of *his* recognition could be anxiously sought from Rome itself, as it was by Cornelius as well as by Novatian (*Epp.* 44, 45, 48). Rome as the senior church (*ecclesia principalis*) could be calculated upon to provide a powerful weapon for anyone involved in such a dispute over recognition; but it was not the only arsenal available. Hence Origen, in the face of attacks, appealed in writing to "Fabian, the bishop of Rome, and to very many other rulers of churches with reference to his orthodoxy," Euseb. *H.E.* 6.36.4. For some further reading, Benson 313 f.; Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 2.2.1240 ff.; Poschmann, *Ecclesia principalis* 86 ff.; Müller, *ZNTW* 28 (1929) 296 ff., esp. 302 ff.; Koch, *Cyp. und röm. Primat* 101 ff.; Z. Garcia Villada, *Historia ecclesiastica de España* 1, 215 ff.; Walker, *Churchmanship* 30 f.; Zernov, *Church Quart. Rev.* 117 (1933-34) 315 ff.

19. The two quotations are drawn from Gal. 6.7 (Fahey 478 f.) and Tit. 1.7 (Fahey 517). Despite the almost universal assumption that Martialis, like Basilides, appealed in person to Stephen in Rome, the language here leaves the point altogether unclear. He may simply be like the lapsed Fortunatianus of Assuras in *Ep.* 65, fraudulently seeking to regain his former episcopal office. On the other hand, he can be said to enjoy the support of some fellow bishops in §9.1: *etsi*

aliqui de collegis nostris . . . cum Basilide et Martiale temere communicent. That generalisation should include Stephen, and Basilides may have, therefore, acted on behalf of Martialis in Rome also.

20. *ut Felix et Sabinus . . . adseverant.* The present tense strongly suggests that Felix and Sabinus have appeared in person before the 37 bishops to state their case. They will, therefore, be bringing back this reply with them on their return homewards.

21. *ut alius Felix de Caesaraugusta fidei cultor ac defensor veritatis litteris suis significat.* Is this Felix a bishop or not? Though often claimed so, it is noteworthy that the wording here is rather against it: no *collega*, *coepiscopus*, *consacerdos*, etc. is invoked for his authority, as is normally found elsewhere in the correspondence. On the other hand, political sense argues for it: it would be entirely reasonable to enlist the support of one of the leading bishoprics of Tarraconensis, of a bishop who may well in fact have cast his *suffragium* at the election of the successor to the episcopacy of Legio-and-Asturica within his own province. But we will have to be content to remain agnostic on the point. At the very least, we can be sure that a Christian community is by now well established at Saragossa. Christianity will have spread up along the Ebro valley from Tarragona, down along the coast (note the Acts of Bishop Fructuosus of Tarragona, 259 A.D., Musurillo 176 ff.). The descriptive phrases given Felix are not idle: he is a preserver of *fides* (which includes the regulations laid down in the Old and New Testaments for priestly appointments, §§1.2 ff.) and a defender of *veritas* (which Stephen so notably failed to perceive, §5.3). If a separate reply was sent to this Felix, we do not have it.

On Caesaraugusta (modern Zaragoza [Saragossa]) on the right bank of the Ebro in N.E. Spain, see *Princ. Encyc. Class. Sites s.v. Caesaraugusta* 181 f. (A. Beltrán), and on the Christian town in antiquity DACL 15 (1950) *s.v. Saragosse* 760 ff. (H. Leclercq).

22. *Basilides . . . in Deum blasphemaverit . . . satis gratulans si sibi vel laico communicare contingeret.* Blasphemy was widely established as a capital delict, i.e. a deadly sin, an *aeternum peccatum*, for which forgiveness might normally be withheld even at the last, judgment being reserved for God, for in essence it concerned an offence "against God" (*in Deum*). And such texts as Mark 3.29 (*quis autem blasphemaverit Spiritum sanctum non habet remissionem sed reus erit aeterni peccati*, cf. Matt. 12.32) could be quoted to reinforce this general, rigorist atti-

tude (as it is in *Test.* 3.28 CCL 3.122 f. on the theme *non posse in ecclesia remitti ei qui in Deum deliquerit*). *Ep.* 73.19.2 discloses clearly Cyprian's own stringent view of such a sin; it was shared by his contemporary bishops, e.g. *Sent. episc.* LXXXVII.29, 31 H. 447 f. (heresy as well as idolatry being readily assimilated with cases of blasphemy). Hence Basilides would count himself well fortunate if his penitence should, in the end, prove not to be lifelong and his sin were eventually remitted before death; but loss of clerical status was standard in such cases of readmission to communion (cf. *Ep.* 49 n. 18; Counc. Elvir., can. 51 Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.250; Counc. Arles, can. 13 Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.289; and n. 25 below). See further DACL 2 (1925) s.v. Blasphème 926 ff. (E. Fehrenbach); this case, 933.

23. Martialis had apparently joined a pagan burial-club (*collegium funeraticium*), the members of which would contribute into a common club-fund a monthly subscription as an insurance against the expenses of funeral rites and towards the upkeep of a jointly-owned burial site; the sodality members would also perform customary ceremonies (*parentalia*, *profusiones*, etc.) in memory of deceased members. Hence Martialis' sons (on married clerics see *Ep.* 1 n. 6) were buried *apud profana sepulchra* and *exterarum gentium more* (Cyprian nowhere else uses the expression *exterae gentes* = pagans; is he quoting the language of the Spanish letter which has informed him of these offences? cf. Watson 287). The tone of indignant horror implies that Christians were customarily interred in separate burial areas; for such Christian *areae* in Rome and in Carthage at this time, see *Ep.* 8 n. 29, *Ep.* 11 nn. 13 and 14 (with literature there cited). Archeology reveals, however, that such principles of exclusiveness were not always strictly upheld in fact among Christian contemporaries (e.g. Février, *Cah. arch.* 11 [1960] 10 f.; de Visscher, *Anal. Boll.* 69 [1951] 41).

Members of such *collegia* also celebrated together communal meals (*cenae*) at stated festivals or regular intervals (e.g. monthly), the riotousness of which was notorious (e.g. Philo *In Flacc.* 4: "the sodalities and clubs which were constantly holding feasts under pretext of making sacrifices and which conducted themselves in their business like drunkards. . . ."; *ibid.* 136: "in the city there are clubs with a large membership whose fellowship is founded on no healthy principle but on strong liquor and drunkenness . . ."). The institutions

of such clubs could lay down penalties against riotous behaviour at such feasts (e.g. "whoever leaves his place to cause a disturbance shall be fined four sesterces; if he insults another and is disorderly, he shall be fined twelve sesterces, etc." CIL 14.2112.25 ff. [Lanuvium]), and see further Waltzing, *Les corporations professionnelles* 1.229 ff., 323 on the banqueting and luxury of such clubs. Hence it is that Martialis can be charged with *gentilium turpia et lutulenta convivia in collegio diu frequentata*, but in this case the adjectives (*turpia et lutulenta*) are suggestive of misconduct morally more reprehensible than mere indecorum. Hence, too, Tertullian, with characteristic acerbity, can retort to the pagans: *ab idolothyti et necrothyti voluptatibus abstinemus*, *De spect.* 13.5 CCL 1.239, and in *Apol.* 39 CCL 1.150 ff. Tertullian pens a notable passage contrasting the modest comportment of Christian *coetus* with the sensual carousing and gluttony at pagan *convivia*; the Christians' funds are not lavished on *epulis . . . nec potaculis nec ingratis voratrinis* (§6), they do not disperse from their communal meals in *inceptiones lasciviarum* (§19).

For bibliography on *collegia funeraticia* see Berger, *Encyclopedic Dictionary* 396; and for an analysis of Gallic funeral *collegia*, Hatt, *La tombe* 77 ff. This passage is also discussed by Saxer, *Morts, martyrs, reliques* 92 ff., 100 f.

24. *actis etiam publice habitis apud procuratorem ducenarium obtemperasse se idolatriae et Christum negasse contestatus est*. Martialis was *libellaticus*, i.e. by bribery, through a proxy, or by some other means he had obtained a certificate which declared that he had complied with the emperor's orders to sacrifice to the gods, but he had not actually performed the sacrificial actions himself (cf. n. 4 above). (I cannot agree with Sage 298 n. 3: "In Martialis' case there is clear evidence that he had sacrificed (67.6).") We are left speculatively to conjecture why he should compound this felony of his by issuing an official affidavit. Several possibilities occur:

(i) Martialis had been a Christian bishop; some local pagan *delator* may have officiously challenged that such a notorious Christian genuinely possessed a certificate of compliance; no one had observed him performing the pagan rites. Martialis was forced under this challenge formally to testify (*actis . . . publice habitis . . . contestatus est*) that he had indeed complied with the orders to sacrifice (*obtemperasse se idolatriae*) and that he had now abjured Christ (*Christum negasse*).

(ii) It may simply have been stipulated by the official when he issued Martialis his certificate of compliance without actual performance that he publicly make such a formal declaration in order to encourage his fellow Christians to follow his lead; compare, on a bishop's ability to draw his flock into apostasy, *Ep.* 55.11.2, *Ep.* 59.10.3.

(iii) Nothing more sinister may be involved than that Martialis is behaving in a fashion similar to his contemporary renegade bishop of Smyrna, Euctemon. Once having lapsed, "he had indeed become ridiculous because of his false oath, wearing his crown and swearing by the emperor's genius and the goddesses of Fate that he was not a Christian and that, unlike the rest, he would omit nothing that would manifest his denial" (*Act. Pionii* 18.14 tr. Musurillo 161).

This passage is also discussed by Schönaich, *Die Libelli* 11; Faulhaber, *ZfKT* 43 (1919) 643; and cf. *Latomus* 30 (1971) 1143 f., *Historia* 22 (1973) 658 f. Frend, *Rise of Christianity* 322, misreads the passage ("One bishop, Martialis of Mérida, was ready to step into the office of procurator ducenarius, once the persecution had begun").

Martialis appears before the tribunal of a *procurator ducenarius*. This equestrian official may have been acting in the capacity of a deputy (*vicarius*) of the (senatorial) provincial governor, especially if he were helping to supervise the execution of Decius' orders for universal sacrifice (see *Letters of Cyprian* 1, ACW 43, intro. pp. 30 ff.). Or indeed he may have replaced the provincial governor himself during an interregnum between governors (occasioned by sudden death, delayed arrival, unexpectedly early departure, etc.). For examples of such interim procuratorial governors, *Pass. Perp.* 6.2 Musurillo 112: *Hilarianus procurator, qui tunc loco proconsulis . . . defuncti ius gladii acceperat*; *Pass. Montan. et Luc.* 6.1 Musurillo 218: *procuratorem, qui defuncti proconsulis partes administrabat*; and see further Pflaum, *Procurateurs équestres* 110 ff.; Malcus, *Opus. rom.* 7 (1967-69) 217 ff. (emphasizing that such *ad hoc* governorships were becoming a legal means of appointing equestrians as governors).

The procurator is *ducenarius*, i.e. in receipt of a salary of 200,000 HS; there were procurators in each of the Spanish provinces of this status. The title is in fact in the process at this time of becoming more honorific than specific, eventually to oust *egregius vir* as an indicator of social status. See on *ducenarii* Pflaum, *Procurateurs équestres* 275 ff.,

and on the titlature idem, *Journ. des savants* 1959, 83 n. 1, and *Titlature et rang social* 178 f., Nutton, *Class. Quart.* 21 (1971) 267 ff. (For the known Spanish procurators see Pflaum, *Carrières* 3.1047 ff. and *Supplément* 117 f.; Balil, *Emerita* 33 [1965] 305 ff., 314 ff.; none happens to be attested for the early 250s.)

25. Cyprian is wanting to employ a knockdown argument against Stephen (the man who could proclaim *nihil innovetur nisi quod traditum est*, *Ep.* 74.1.2). Stephen's own close predecessor in office, Cornelius, is therefore given pride of place (cf. *Ep.* 68.5.1 for a similar manoeuvre); and that predecessor had formally laid down (*decreverit*) conditions of permanent laicisation for penitents in the category to which Basilides and Martialis belong (*ab ordinatione . . . cleri adque sacerdotali honore prohiberi*). The credentials accorded Cornelius are pointed for this purpose. He was a man who did indeed go out of his way to create harmony and conciliation (*pacificus*: see *Ep.* 60 n. 5 on this epithet applied to Cornelius) but acting only within the bounds of strict justice (*iustus*). And those virtues were consummated in the crowning glory of martyrdom (*martyrio quoque dignatione Domini honoratus*; for Cornelius regarded as *martyr* see *Ep.* 60 intro.). For the movement of ideas here cf. Pont. Vit. Cyp. 14 H. cv on Stephen's successor: *de Xisto bono et pacifico sacerdote ac propterea beatissimo martyre*; *Ep.* 13.4.3: *qui pacifica . . . et iusta . . . loquitur, Christum cottidie confitetur*. As if this were not irrefutable proof enough for the righteousness of Cornelius' policy (cf. *Ep.* 55 n. 17 on the invocation of a martyr's witness to give the seal of authority), Cornelius also enjoyed in his judgment, Cyprian avers, the unanimous support of the united bishops of the entire world (*nobiscum et cum omnibus omnino episcopis in toto mundo constitutis*). That, in Cyprian's view, means the backing of the universal Church.

Cornelius is said to have passed his decree *iam pridem*. That is likely to have been at the Italian Council of 251, which followed the African Council in that year, *Ep.* 55.6.1 f.; *Ep.* 59.10.2 shows cases of episcopal *lapsi* being reviewed at the African Council of 251, and *Ep.* 55.11.3 shows a special case of an episcopal offender being so dealt with at the Italian Council of 251 (*sic . . . admissus est Trofimus ut laicus communicet*). See further on the likely context of the decree, *The Letters of Cyprian* 3, ACW 46, pp. 21 ff.

For such cases of laicisation see *Ep.* 55.11.3 (Trofimus), *Ep.*

64.1.1 (Victor), *Ep.* 65.1.1 (Fortunatianus), and cf. *Ep.* 49 n. 18 for discussion. For explication of the phrase *ab ordinatione . . . cleri* (“from holding clerical office”), see van Beneden, *Aux origines* 118 f. (on *ordinatio* here); also Vilela, *Condition collégiale* 260 f. (on *clerus*).

26. *in novissimis temporibus . . . deficiente iam mundo adque adpropinquante antichristo*. This is the last time in the correspondence that we have such an argument couched in directly apocalyptic terms: see Alföldy, *Historia* 22 (1973) 488 f. and *Ep.* 57 intro. on this millenarian mood. The bishops will here be alluding to such eschatological passages as Matt. 24.4 ff. (*Domini voce*, Fahey 322 ff.) and 2 Tim. 3.1 ff. (*apostolorum contestatione*, Fahey 515 f.).

27. There are, successively, allusions to 1 Macc. 2.24 (Mattathias, Fahey 597 f.), 1 Kings 19.10 (Elijah, Fahey 584 f.), and such passages as Dan. 6.20 ff., 14.3 ff. (Daniel) and Dan. 3.12 ff. (the three youths). On Daniel and the three youths as martyr-figures in Cyprian, see Fahey 592 ff.; and for Daniel in early Christian (especially African) iconography, see Salomonson, *Voluptatem spectandi*, esp. 55 ff., 60 ff., 72 ff.

28. *aliena perfidia . . . magis excitat et exaltat ad gloriam*. For this paradox that the harassment of error provides the faithful with the training and challenge for a martyr’s glory, compare *Ep.* 59.18.2: *armant nos haeretici . . . magis erigunt et accendunt* with n. 87 ad loc.

29. Rom. 3.3 f., Fahey 426 f.

30. Ps. 49.17 f. (Fahey 139 f.) followed by Rom. 1.29 f., 32 (Fahey 423).

31. The bishops would be fully aware that these harsh but generalising words could be made to apply to the particular case of the bishop of Rome himself, however unwittingly Stephen may have acted (cf. n. 1 above); the pollution of grave sin admitted of no compromises.

32. *opto vos, fratres carissimi, semper bene valere*. The first-person-singular verb (*opto*) here suggests that while this is, formally, a joint conciliar letter, Cyprian may have been left to write the subscription and indeed to compose the final form of the document. The expected *optamus* is, however, found as a manuscript variant. At the very least, we can say that the letter follows habitual Cyprianic style by concluding with close echoes of words and motifs drawn from its opening paragraph: *pro fidei vestrae integritate ~ integritatis et fidei vestrae*

firmitatem; *pro Dei timore* ~ *religioso timore*; *libellis idolatriae conmaculatos* ~ *profanis et maculatis sacerdotibus*; *iustam* . . . *ac necessariam sollicitudinem vestram* ~ *religiosam sollicitudinem*; *rescribi* . . . *vel solacio vel auxilio* ~ *adhortamur litteris nostris*. For this standard technique cf. e.g. *Ep.* 28 (with n. 14), *Ep.* 55 (with n. 2).

LETTER 68

Contents: Faustinus of Lyons has kept Cyprian informed of reports he and his colleagues have sent to Stephen. These concern Marcianus of Arles, who has allied himself to Novatian by following his heartless policy towards the penitents, denying them any hope of reconciliation. Stephen has a duty, therefore, to write to the bishops of Gaul to put a stop to Marcianus' insulting defiance. Novatian has long been condemned as an enemy of the Church (as the answer given by the African bishops to envoys from Novatian illustrates); such followers of Novatian must now be condemned likewise. Let Stephen write so that Marcianus is excommunicated and a replacement is appointed in Arles. There must be an end to the pitiless neglect of Marcianus' flock; the sheep that survive must be given safety and shelter, as the Lord has commanded. Cornelius and Lucius, along with all the bishops everywhere, decreed that reconciliation is not to be denied to the lapsed; Stephen, above others, must uphold the sacred memory of these martyrs, his predecessors in office. Anyone who differs from all of these bishops cannot share in the truth of the Holy Spirit with them. Stephen should let Cyprian know who it is who replaces Marcianus.

Date and Circumstances: The letter must find a date within Stephen's pontificate, i.e. spring 254–August 257 (see *Ep.* 67 intro.). And it must come sufficiently *after* Stephen's inauguration to allow time for (a) letters to go "from not only Faustinus but also from our other fellow bishops in the same province" (of Gaul, §2.1) to Stephen in Rome (§1.1), and there to remain without the desired response (implied plainly by §§2.1, 3.1); and (b) letters to go, "more than once" (*semel adque iterum* §1.1), from Faustinus in Lyons over to Cyprian in Car-

thage on the subject matter of (a), at least one of these messages containing remarks about Stephen's failure adequately to respond to (a), remarks which elicit this letter from Cyprian to Stephen. It begins to sound as if the earliest possible date for *Ep.* 68, allowing for this preliminary interchange, would be well on in the later part of 254/first half of 255. On the other hand, the letter would be most comfortably placed reasonably early in Stephen's pontificate, before any major collision between Stephen and Cyprian has occurred (i.e., before the course of 256, at least; witness *Ep.* 75 if nothing else); the incautious and unguarded confidence of §5.2 (there cannot be divergence of opinion among bishops in whom there is the one Holy Spirit) has all the ring of a period before Cyprian and Stephen have crossed swords so belligerently. Indeed (though this is less certain), *Ep.* 68 should probably find a place *before Ep.* 67, where one can detect the tone towards Stephen to be perceptibly a touch sharper, frostier (§§5.3 f.), even cutting (§§9.1 f.). A date, therefore, in the broad range later 254/255.

Further discussion in Ritschl, *De epistulis*, 30 f.; Nelke, *Chronologie* 87 ff.; Benson 316; Harnack, *Geschichte* 2.2, 356 f.; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 29.

The document makes a valuable addition to our knowledge of the early Church in Gaul. We become informed of the reality of the persecution of Decius there (cf. n. 4 below). We learn of the establishment of other Gallic bishoprics apart from Lyons (already known from the later second century, e.g. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.1.29)—not only Arles (§1.1) but also a number of other sees (the *coepiscopi* of §§1.1, 2.1). And there is the distinct suggestion of an established synodal organization among those bishoprics (§§1.1, 2.1, 3.1). But, as so often, we are given information so tantalizingly laconic that it raises more queries than it settles: is there question of but one ecclesiastical province, centred, at this time, on Lyons (§§1.1, 2.1), or can there be discerned a further grouping in Provence, centred upon Arles, §3.1 (hence perhaps the special difficulty in effecting the deposition of its incumbent, and a prelude to later ecclesiastical rivalry and ambitions, e.g. A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* 2.881 f., 889 f.)? I do not know on what evidence Frend, *Rise of Christianity* 353, can state that Arles is at this time "the chief see in Gaul." And from Cyprian's text can Arles itself be perceived to be (though I find this

yet more dubious myself) in some special form of dependent status upon the diocese of Rome (§§3.1, 5.2)? See, on these issues, nn. 3, 4 and 13 below, with further studies in Grégoire et al., *Persécutions* 95 ff.; Hirschfeld, *Kleine Schriften* 171 ff.; Telfer, *Office* 96 ff., RAC 8 (1972) s.v. "Gallia" 891 ff. (E. Démougeot).

The bishop of Arles, Marcianus, has espoused rigorist (Novatianic) penitential discipline, refusing reconciliation to lapsed even on their deathbed, and he has done so *annis istis superioribus* (§3.1). Cyprian has been approached by Faustinus in the face of this intransigent rigorism; that is understandable. The African Church had proved itself, somewhat surprisingly, a forthright leader in reaching more compassionate penitential legislation (see e.g. *Epp.* 55, 57), and Cyprian had turned out to be personally a staunch and loyal defender of the see of Rome against the illegitimate pretensions of Novatian (e.g. *Ep.* 55). For him the penitential policy of the Novatianists and Novatian's own episcopal claims had become inextricably identified: the heretical nature of the latter entailed the heretical status of the former.

Cyprian has been moved to spur Stephen into action in the face of this scandal. We might have expected that he would proceed to wield the most effective weapon available to him under these circumstances, emphasizing that Marcianus, as a Novatianist, does not recognize the legitimacy and therefore the authority of Stephen's chair. But of this not a word. The furthest he can go is, vaguely, to assert—more than once—that Marcianus has "allied himself with Novatian" (*Novatiano se coniunxerit* §1.1, *se Novatiano coniungens* §4.3), he has flauntingly "separated himself from our communion" (*a communicatione se nostra segregaverit* §2.1), he is a "supporter of Novatian's" (*Novatiano studens* §2.1). Marcianus may have pursued the same rigorist penitential discipline as Novatianists, but, given the persuasive *Tendenza* of this letter, it is fair to conclude from this telling omission that Marcianus could not have been concerned with Novatian's pretensions to the chair of Rome. That might well make it difficult for Stephen—and some of Marcianus' Gallic colleagues—to conclude that his disciplinary policy (which only half a decade ago Cyprian himself might have been inclined to agree with) was now *ipso facto* heretical and that Marcianus was, therefore, damnable. We are left to wonder how far Marcianus' was an isolated position despite the claims of §5.2

init. ("Throughout the world without exception we all made the same declaration on the matter [of granting reconciliation]").

What Cyprian does spend his time on is that policy pursued by Marcianus—about 70% of the letter is devoted to the inhumanity of Marcianus, his egregious failure in pastoral compassion towards his injured sheep (the catalogue of substantives, many of them repeated, against which he offends is impressive: *pietas, bonitas, misericordia, lenitas, solacium, subsidium, clementia, opitulatio, humanitas, sollicitudo*). There can be no doubt that this reflects Cyprian's own deeply-felt concerns; he is outraged as a pastor; the omission was telling, but equally significant must be the emphasis. And Stephen is expected to be spurred to action by it.

The heartlessness of Marcianus is an offence against the whole college of bishops (not just Stephen); that is heavily stressed throughout (cf. n. 6 below). Novatian had been excommunicated by those bishops; so ought, therefore, this *adulator* of his (§2). But the prime mover of this action is expected to be Stephen—by both Faustinus and Cyprian: it is proper that he lend his voice, with its gravity and authority (§5.1), to theirs and thus convince Faustinus' Gallic colleagues and the laity of Arles to set the long-overdue excommunication proceedings in motion (§§2.1, 3.1). We have a valuable document illustrating the pivotal role perceived for the see of Rome within the college of bishops (see further nn. 4, 6, 7 below). But it is well to remember that the letter is in essence about the pastoral duty of that college of the bishops to "stick together" (§3.2); it is not concerned with "primacy" rights of the see of Rome.

1. *Cyprianus Stephano fratri s.* This form of salutation is standard between bishops. Cyprian uses it when addressing fellow African bishops (eg. *Epp.* 2, 3, 55, 71, 73) as well as the bishop of Rome (e.g. to Cornelius, *Epp.* 45, 47, 48, etc.). Cornelius replies to Cyprian similarly (*Epp.* 49, 50).

2. *Faustinus collega noster Lugduni consistens . . . semel atque iterum mihi scripsit.* A bishopric had been established at Lyons by at least the 170s (cf. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.1.29 [Pothinus]); it was the senior (and presumably the earliest) see of the Gallic Church, cf. Euseb. *H.E.* 5.23.3 (on Irenaeus). In the traditional list of the incumbents of Lyons, Faustinus' tenure is given fifth place, DACL 10 (1931) *s.v.*

"Lyon" 181 f. (H. Leclercq), and for the early history of the diocese see Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*² 1.39 ff. Faustinus' Latin name may provide a touch of evidence for some progress in latinisation by now within what appears to have been, in the 170s, a predominantly Oriental Christian community at Lyons (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.1.3 ff.): cf. Bardy, *Irénikon* 14 (1937) 12 n. 2.

Observe the repeated contacts between Gaul and Africa (*semel atque iterum*); §5.2 also implies regular correspondence and travelers between the two areas (where see n. 30), but this letter provides the sole evidence of what may have been, in fact, an extensive correspondence. Faustinus (no doubt with diplomatic awareness) has kept Cyprian informed of letters addressed to Stephen in Rome; Cyprian can be expected to have reciprocated, sending to Gaul, we may surmise, at least copies of major documents that had been also despatched over to Rome (in the category, say, of African conciliar *acta* [cf. *Ep.* 55.6.2], the list of orthodox bishops in Africa [*Ep.* 59.9.3], or the like). Cyprian's strong stance on penitential issues and Novatian would be, therefore, well known. On the motivation behind Faustinus' correspondence, see intro. to this letter.

3. *nuntiata tam ab eo quam a ceteris coepiscopis nostris in eadem provincia constitutis*. It sounds as if the information reached Stephen by some jointly composed document(s) rather than by individually written letters. That, in turn, is suggestive of some conciliar organization among this Gallic hierarchy. This constitutes our earliest record of Gallic sees established outside Lyons. Apart from Arles, to be mentioned immediately, they still remain anonymous, however—though Trèves, Reims, Vienne, Toulouse, Marseilles, among others, are likely early candidates (cf. Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*² 1.44 f., and see Rousselle, *MEFR* 89 (1977), 333 ff. for recent analysis of the information on the Gallic Church provided by the Council of Arles early in the next century). Christian communities (without *bishops*) are, however, likely to have preceded by many years the establishment of the episcopal sees: Gilliard, *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 68 (1975) 17 ff.

The phrase *in eadem provincia* has roused discussion, and a measure of disagreement. Is the reference particular (e.g. the Roman province of Lugdunensis, of which Lyons was the leading city; so Harnack, *Mission* (ET) 458) or more general (the ecclesiastical division of Gaul)? If the latter, what precise area was included in this *provin-*

cia? (Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*², 1.44 f. n. 1, prudently abandoned his earlier interpretation, which strained language beyond endurance: he had seen *in eadem provincia* as an exclusive reference to *Gallia Narbonensis*, the *provincia*. Quite simply, it cannot be the *same* province as that wherein Faustinus resided).

A similar ambiguity is encountered in Cyprian's use of *provincia* with reference to North Africa: support can be found both for the narrower interpretation (the secular province of Africa Proconsularis) and the more extended usage (the North African provinces, the sphere of Cyprian's episcopal presidency): see *Epp.* 27 n. 14, 48 n. 15, 55 n. 93, 59 n. 81. In this letter the likelihood is strongly in favour of a broad significance, for in §2.1 the present phrase is glossed as *coepiscopos nostros in Gallia constitutos* (variant reading: *in Galliis*), indicating that the reference is to the Church in the general Gallic area. Moreover, the use in §3.1 (*dirigantur in provinciam et ad plebem Arelate consistentem . . . litterae*) seems to suggest that *Gallia Narbonensis* (Provence), in which Arles is situated, was understood to be included in Faustinus' *provincia* (though that reasonable deduction has been disputed). For further discussion, Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*², 1.44 f., RAC 8 (1972) s.v. "Gallia" 894 f., 897 f. (E. Démougeot); Griffe, *La Gaule chrétienne* 55, Harnack, *Mission* (ET) 451 ff.; Müller, ZNTW 28 (1929) 297.

4. *quod Marcianus Arelate consistens Novatiano se coniunxerit*. Marcianus is otherwise unknown, the loss of his name from the records perhaps suggesting that he was in the end excommunicated (cf. Colson, *Épiscopat* 103 n. 2; I do not know how Sage 302 can boldly claim "Stephen heeded the African's admonitions to take action"). He has been bishop since at least the end of the persecution of Decius (251), §3.1. Cyprian here pointedly avoids giving him episcopal status. Notoriously, the honour of being the foundation bishop of Arles is given, in later legend, to Trophimus, who is dated to precisely this period of the mid-third century (Greg. Tours, *Hist. Franc.* 1.30 MGH *Script. rer. Meroving.* 1.48). It was reasonable to expect that Arles, situated as it is in the delta of the great waterway of the Rhône and with a rich Greek and Oriental element in its population, should have developed a fully-fledged Christian community by this date; the twin cemeteries of Aliscamps and Trinquetaille, on either bank of the Rhône, remain as celebrated evidence of early Christianity in the

area. See Constans, *Arles antique* 106 ff., with Christian antiquities 352 ff. (churches), 380 ff. (sarcophagi etc.); Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux*², 1.19, 249 ff.; DACL 1 (1924) *s.v.* "Arles" 2889 ff. (H. Leclercq and W. Henry); and *ibid.* *s.v.* "Aliscamps" 1211 ff. (H. Leclercq); DHGE 4 (1930) *s.v.* "Arles" 231 ff. (L. Royer).

That Marcianus could espouse Novatian's rigorist tenets on penitence is good enough evidence that the orders of Decius for general sacrifice had been operative in Gaul; in the aftermath have been left behind those characteristic cases of lapse, over the treatment of which Gallic Christians could debate, and evidently disagree (cf. §3.1 below) as contemporary churches were doing elsewhere (see further *Letters of Cyprian* 2, ACW 44, intro. pp. 11 ff.). From what follows it appears that while Marcianus adopted a rigorist stance in the administration of penance in his own diocese, he had been neither ousted from his see by his Gallic episcopal confraternity (§2.1 *necdum a nobis videatur abstentus*) nor rejected by his own *plebs* (§3.1). It suggests a fair degree of respect and sympathy, if not terror and awe, for his purist attitude. Faustinus would need to be assured of impressive and decisive support from within the college of bishops abroad if he should hope to be able to deal effectively with this anomaly at home.

5. *pulsantibus . . . solacia et subsidia cludantur*. For literal elements which lie behind this dominant metaphor in Cyprian's penitential discourse, see *Ep.* 30 n. 39.

6. *cui rei nostrum est consulere et subvenire*. It might be well to obviate misinterpretation by underlining the implication of this and similar phrases throughout the letter. Cyprian's insistent argument is that this affair concerns the *college* of bishops, to which he and Stephen both belong. It is, therefore, not just the bishop of Rome, Stephen, who exclusively needs to act, but he does have a *special* responsibility and duty to respond (explained e.g. in §5.1). For this insistence on the concern of the corporate body of bishops, see §§2.1; 3.2, 4.1 f.; 5.1.

7. *ne ultra Marcianum . . . collegio nostro insultare patiantur, quod necdum a nobis videatur abstentus*. It is clear from this that Marcianus has not yet been formally excommunicated—despite the fact that his penitential administration is in defiance of agreed policy (§5.1). It is plainly anticipated that he should, in the first instance, be condemned locally by his fellow Gallic bishops (§3.1); other communi-

ties might then publicly concur and endorse that judgment (cf. *Ep.* 59 n. 74), formally recognizing his replacement (§5.2). But to be able to effect that initial, local condemnation, Faustinus needs to muster reinforcements from outside bishops in eminent positions of authority. Stephen, as occupant of the *ecclesia principalis* (*Ep.* 59.14.1), was an obvious key figure in such a manoeuvre (cf. *Ep.* 67 n. 18), providing the powerful leverage of his *gravitas* and *auctoritas* (§5.1). The African bishops had acted similarly when they sought to condemn Privatus of Lambaesis; the bishop of Rome was enlisted to second their condemnation (*Ep.* 59.10.1, where see nn. 47 and 48).

8. *Novatianus ipse . . . olim abstentus et hostis ecclesiae iudicatus sit.* This formal condemnation appears to have occurred first (as we might expect) in Novatian's local area, at the Italian Council of 251 (? c. July): Novatian and his persistent adherents, it was decreed, were to be considered "strangers to the Church" (Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.2). Other communities in due course followed (cf. Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.22, 6.43.2 for some Western evidence, Diony. Alex. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5 for Eastern churches). Clearly Marcianus had not been included nominatim in any such condemnation of Novatianists. Indeed, we have grounds for suspecting that his position may have been somewhat more subtle: he may well not have formally recognized Novatian's own claim to the Roman chair (the basis for Novatian's condemnation) while at the same time inclining towards the penitential views which Novatian came to advocate. This letter is concerned about those views, and not about the technicalities of Novatian's "consecration" and his claims to the Roman *cathedra*. Otherwise it is odd that Stephen needs to be so chivvied to get him to denounce a bishop who, outrageously, did not recognize his own legitimacy. In *Ep.* 55.21.1 f. we learn that some African bishops refused to implement the agreed policy to grant reconciliation to adulterers—but without schism; in this present instance, however, the opposition policy is now fatally identified with a breakaway church, at least so far as Cyprian is concerned. For him, a "Novatianist sympathiser" was *ipso facto* outside the *ecclesia catholica*. Stephen's view, and that of some of Marcianus' Gallic colleagues, may have been otherwise.

9. *hinc a concilio plurimorum sacerdotum qui praesentes eramus sententiam retulerit.* . . . For good measure Cyprian reminds Stephen of the spirited stand which the African bishops had taken in vigorously re-

jecting envoys sent by Novatian. When did these particular (abortive) overtures occur? They cannot have been at the African Council of spring 251, for the bishops had left that meeting still undecided over the issue between Novatian and Cornelius (see *Ep.* 44 intro., *Letters of Cyprian* 3, ACW 46, intro. p. 19). Three possibilities, therefore, remain:

(i) The incident may have been at some *ad hoc* meeting of local bishops, called in e.g., to help advise Cyprian after Caldonius and Fortunatus had submitted, from Italy, their findings about Cornelius and Novatian (see *Ep.* 44 n. 6). But the language here is rather against that; it decidedly suggests a gathering too large (*plurimorum*) and too formal (*sententiam*) to have been *ad hoc*. Cyprian, however, cannot always be exonerated of tendentious wording.

(ii) It may have been at an (otherwise unattested) autumn Council meeting of 251. This item of business would indeed have the best claim to have figured on its (putative) agenda.

(iii) It may well have been at the spring (mid-May) Council of 252 that these Novatianist approaches were so brusquely rejected, especially if this was the first African Council to be held since Novatian's rejection by the Italian Council of 251. Novatian would be anxious to seize this opportunity for presenting his case. In that event, there is a good chance that the bishops, described here as *plurimi*, were in fact 66 in number (see *Ep.* 64 intro.). For fuller discussion on all this, see *Letters of Cyprian* 3, ACW 46, intro. pp. 23 ff.

10. *qui episcopo Cornelio in catholica ecclesia . . . ordinato profanum altare erigere . . . temptaverit*. Note the basis given for the rejection of Novatian: it was not a question of doctrinal interpretation but of the priority and propriety (*de Dei iudicio et cleri ac plebis suffragio*) of Cornelius' *ordinatio*. Cf. *Epp.* 44 n. 8, 48 n. 21; 55 nn. 35 and 36.

11. *Novatiano nuper retuso et refutato et per totum orbem a sacerdotibus Dei abstento*. Despite the impressions of this summary claim, it is clear that indecision and division over Novatian's pretensions had persisted for no little time among the churches. Dionysius of Alexandria e.g. had occasion sharply to remind Stephen that peace among the Eastern churches on the issue was an unexpected blessing and arrived at only after there had been widespread and protracted division (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5, cf. Euseb. *H.E.* 6.46.3)—a peace which

Stephen, by his indignant stand over the baptismal issue, was then doing his best to upset (Euseb. *H.E.* 7.4).

12. *nunc adultores adhuc . . . patiamur . . . de maiestate ac dignitate ecclesiae iudicare*. Observe how fundamental to Cyprian's conception of the functions of a bishop is the role of *judge*. Hence he can describe in *Ep.* 59.5.1 the bishop as *ad tempus iudex vice Christi*, and compare §4.3 below. It was natural, however, that this particular role should find emphasis here: it is a penitential context, and the bishop's part in penitence was conceived in judicial terms (see *Ep.* 59 n. 18). Like Puppianus, these Novatianist bishops, by so slightly disagreeing with the determination handed down by their episcopal confreres (§5.2), are setting themselves up to be "judges of the judges of God" (cf. *Ep.* 66.3.2: *te . . . iudicem iudicis ad tempus a Deo dati constituis*).

13. *Dirigantur in provinciam et ad plebem Arelate consistentem a te litterae quibus abstento Marciano alius in loco eius substituat*. On the significance of *provincia* here, see n. 3 above (in view of the expressions in §§1.1 and 2.1, it is most unlikely to refer here exclusively to Provence, *Gallia Narbonensis*). The laity of Arles are to be addressed, for no longer do they have a recognized bishop (cf. n. 4 above); it is the duty of the *plebs* there to repudiate their unworthy bishop (cf. *Ep.* 67.3.2: *ipsa [plebs] maxime habeat potestatem . . . sacerdotes . . . indignos recusandi*). The comprovincial Gallic bishops would be expected to confirm that repudiation by decree of excommunication (*abstento Marciano*, cf. §2.1): see *Ep.* 67 n. 10. The way would thus be made clear for a new episcopal *ordinatio* to be held at Arles (*alius in loco eius substituat*).

Much heavy weather has been made of this reasonably plain-sailing passage. Stephen is not being asked to be himself the first to excommunicate Marcianus, neither is he personally to appoint Marcianus' successor; rather he is being asked to so write, bringing to bear his weighty authority (§5.1), that this long overdue train of events (excommunication and replacement) should at last be set in motion. For contrary views see e.g., Walker, *Churchmanship* 30 ("Cyprian instructed Pope Stephen to make the new appointment"); Gryson, *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.* 68 (1973) 383 (Cyprian "ne lui demande pas seulement d'excommunier Marcien, mais de lui donner un successeur"); Chapman, *Studies on the Early Papacy* 43 f.; Sage 301, 333; Bacchiocchi,

From Sabbath to Sunday 210 ("Cyprian's request to Pope Stephen to depose Marcion [*sic*] of Arles"). These views can only be based on the wording here (which is admittedly imprecise); but that wording, vague as it is (Stephen is, literally, to send "letters such that by them another may be substituted in his [= Marcianus'] place"), must be interpreted in the light of known procedures and Cyprian's strongly expressed opinions elsewhere (e.g. *Ep.* 67). See further *Ep.* 55 n. 113, and other discussions in Koch, *Cyprian und der römische Primat* 109 ff.; Poschmann, *Ecclesia principalis* 85 ff.; Benson 318 ff., etc.

14. *grex Christi qui in bodiurnum ab illo dissipatus et vulneratus contemnitur colligatur*. It remains a trifle ambiguous who should be regarded as responsible for the scattering and wounding of the flock: should it be put down as an effect of the persecution of Decius (a devastation Marcianus has allowed to continue) or as an effect of Marcianus' own divisive and unsympathetic pastoral administration? I have translated according to the former interpretation, but the latter is also possible.

15. *copiosum corpus est sacerdotum concordiae mutuae glutino atque unitatis vinculo copulatum*. For this arresting language to convey the strength of the linkage which binds so fast the (geographically) scattered members of the college of bishops, cf. *Ep.* 66 n. 31.

16. *ubi sit tutus [accessus] et salutaris introitus et statio segura*. Many manuscripts omit *accessus*, but the loss may be merely accidental (explicable by homoeoteleuton). Its presence, however, conforms with Cyprian's rhetorical habits ("the rule of three"), just as he uses in this context threefold analogy (sheep, ships, travellers), and I have translated it accordingly. In defence of its retention see Bayard, *Le latin* 361; Watson 213 n. 1.

17. For other casual evidence of brigandage in Cyprian, see *Ep.* 57 n. 27, and consult MacMullen, *Enemies* App. B ("Brigandage") 255 ff., for a rich assemblage of other evidence (this example, p. 256). For an interesting illustration of this passage, note Libanius *Or.* 33.40 (ed. Foerster 3.185): rural inns used as bandits' headquarters, but, in this case, with the collusion of the innkeepers.

18. *suscipiamus ad nos prompta et benigna humanitate*. Note the close approximation here of *humanitas* to "hospitality," on which usage consult the monograph of Rieks, *Homo, humanus, humanitas*, esp. 115 ff.

19. There is, of course, allusion to the Good Samaritan, Luke 10.29 ff. (Fahey 347).

20. Ezek. 34.4–6, 10, 16 (with omissions), Fahey 231 f. On Cyprian's text here (*consolati estis* or *consolidastis?*) cf. *Ep.* 57 n. 29.

21. Matt. 9.12, Fahey 292 f.

22. Habak. 2.5 (Fahey 249 f.) followed by Luke 16.15 (Fahey 355).

23. . . . *qui sibi placeant, qui . . . aliquid sibi adroganter adsumant*. In the former clause there is a passing allusion to 2 Tim. 3.2, Fahey 515 f., and cf. *Ep.* 11 n. 7a. In the latter clause Cyprian redeploys language he has already used of Novatianists in *Ep.* 54.3.3: *sibi semper quidam plus quam mitis iustitia deposcit adsumunt* (cf. *Ep.* 59.2.3: [*adversarius*] *tantum sibi . . . adsumit in saeculo*).

24. *servandus est enim antecessorum nostrorum beatorum martyrum Cornelii et Lucii honor gloriosus*. Cyprian has held in reserve his trump argument: not to foster the execution of the policy adopted by Cornelius and Lucius will be to besmirch their sacred memories (the threefold occurrence of *honor*, *honoremus*, and *honorificare* within three lines is not idle)—and those martyrs are none other than Stephen's own immediate predecessors. Cornelius, having died in exile, was promptly regarded as martyr (*Ep.* 61.3.1); cf. Chronog. 354 ed. Mommsen MGH 9.75: *ibi cum gloria dormitionem accepit*, and see further *Ep.* 60 intro. But Lucius, on the other hand, had safely returned from exile a confessor (*Ep.* 61.1.1, 2.3, 4.1); now, after death, he is here, for greater impressiveness, honorifically (and conveniently) assimilated into the same exalted class with Cornelius. For despite e.g., the (standard) embroideries in the *Liber pontificalis* (a *Valeriano capite truncatus*, ed. Duchesne 153), there is no real evidence that Lucius died a martyr's death: there is no MP on his (fragmentary) tombstone and, significantly, he figures in the Roman *depositio episcoporum*, and not in the *depositio martirum*, of Chronog. 354 ed. Mommsen MGH 9.70 f. For further discussion Hummel 26 f.

25. *honorificare et servare gravitate et auctoritate tua debes qui vicarius et successor eorum factus es*. Note the weapons Stephen is expected to wield: the *gravitas* (lofty dignity) and *auctoritas* (influential position) that are particularly his (*tua*). Observe, too, the use of *vicarius*, a word destined to have a long history in connexion with the bishop of Rome: cf. on the word *Ep.* 41.1.2: *ego vos pro me vicarios miserim*; *Ep.* 59.5.1:

sacerdos . . . iudex vice Christi; *Ep.* 66.4.2: *praepositos qui apostolis vicaria ordinatione succedunt*; and see further Pietri, *Roma christiana* 1612 ff., and the study of Maccarrone, *Vicarius Christi* (1952): usage of Tertullian and Cyprian, 26 ff.

26. *illi enim pleni spiritu Domini et in glorioso martyrio constituti . . . paenitentia acta fructum communicationis et pacis negandum non esse litteris suis signaverunt*. Note the descriptive phrases: they put the ultimate seal of authority upon the policies Cornelius and Lucius adopted in life, for martyrdom has the retroactive effect of sanctifying past lives and actions (cf. *Ep.* 55 n. 17, *Ep.* 67.6.3 and n. 25 ad loc.). It is quite possible, however, that Cyprian is thinking, in particular, of the *second* stage of the settlement of the penitential question. The African Council, in view of threatening persecution, decreed (most probably in spring 253) that those who were still doing penance (e.g. *sacrificati*) should now be reconciled, and they urged Cornelius to follow suit (*Ep.* 57, where see intro. and n. 32). Cornelius may have done so, but by letter (*litteris suis*), from the exile which will have shortly followed (see *Letters of Cyprian*, vol. 3, ACW 46, intro. pp. 14 f.); his successor, Lucius, promptly finding himself endangered and in exile, made known, also by letter, his endorsement of his predecessor's policy. They will have written, therefore, when inspired by the Spirit, as all are who are undergoing martyrdom, *in glorioso martyrio constituti* (cf. *Epp.* 6 n. 14, 10 nn. 19 and 31). Hence it can be claimed that "they, when they were filled with the spirit of the Lord and were radiant with the glory of martyrdom, indicated by their letters that, penitence having been done, the reward of reconciliation and communion was not to be denied to the fallen." This passage is further discussed in Koch, *Cyp. Unter.* 390 f.

27. *quam rem omnes omnino ubique censuimus*. Cyprian can confidently voice this claim of universal approbation, for those bishops who disagreed (and the evidence suggests that there was considerable sympathy for Novatian's rigorist penitential views) are, in Cyprian's opinion, now to be identified as Novatianists, and they are, therefore, *outside*. They don't count in the reckoning. Stephen cannot ignore this overwhelming Christian consensus.

28. *neque enim poterat esse apud nos sensus diversus in quibus unus esset spiritus*. A celebrated formulation of Cyprian's noble (but, alas, all too simplistic) conception of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church,

which, ironically enough, is to lead directly to the impasse between Cyprian and Stephen over the rebaptism controversy. The shock of that clash has clearly not yet occurred. There are strong grounds for reading here *in quibus unus est spiritus* (against Hartel's *esset*): see Bayard, *Le latin* 361. There is allusion to Ephes. 4.4, Fahey 484 ff.

29. *significa plane nobis quis in locum Marciani Arelate fuerit substitutus*. We can deduce that Stephen in Rome will get word of an episcopal appointment in Provence before that information percolates to Africa; we can also deduce that if Stephen writes to Gaul and the congregation in Arles (as he is urged to do in §3.1), he can expect to receive, as a matter of course, replies to those letters giving news of the outcome. But we cannot safely deduce (as some have confidently done, e.g. Müller, ZNTW 28 [1929] 296 ff.; Gryson, *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.* 68 [1973] 383 f.; Sage 301 f., 334) that the Church at Arles, being—it is conjectured—a foundation from Rome, is still in some form of special dependance upon its mother community. Cyprian is not writing about any such ecclesiastical niceties; he is making a calculated diplomatic prod, deftly assuming that Stephen will have responded to his exhortations and written those letters. I do not know how Sage 302 is able to claim: "Stephen heeded the African's admonitions to take action, at least in Gaul, but his motives are hidden."

30. *ut sciamus ad quem fratres nostros dirigere et cui scribere debeamus*. Christian travelers from Carthage to Southern Gaul will need to be directed to the (orthodox) bishop at Arles, and Cyprian will need to address to that bishop letters of introduction on their behalf as well (and a fraternal letter of recognition, no doubt; on which see *Ep.* 44 n. 12). Cf. *Ep.* 48.3.1 on the delicate situation for Christian travelers from Carthage to Rome—and for Cyprian—when the question of the legitimate bishop there had not yet been formally settled (see n. 14 ad loc., and compare also the bishops' letter excommunicating Paul of Samosata addressed to the bishops of Rome and Alexandria and other fellow bishops ("We notify to you [the appointment of Domnus as replacement bishop] that you may write to him and from him receive letters of communion" [*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.30.17])). For some later regulations about these customary "letters of communion" carried by Christian travelers, see Counc. Elvira can. 25, 58 Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.234 f., 253, and on the form of such Christian letters of recommendation (based on the evidence of Greek papyrol-

ogical samples) Kim, *Form and Structure* 97 ff.; K. Treu in *Zetesis* (1973) 629 ff.; cf. H. Cotton, *Documentary Letters of Recommendation in Latin* (1981). A good example is P. Oxy. 1162: "Leon, presbyter, to the presbyters and deacons who share the local service, beloved brothers in the Lord God, fullness of joy. Our brother Ammonius, who is coming to you, receive in peace; through whom we and those with us greet you and those who are with you kindly in the Lord. I pray for your health in the Lord God. Emmanuel is my witness. Amen." (tr. A. S. Hunt). For earlier evidence of Africans' contact with Gaul, see the monograph of B. Fischer, *Les monnaies antiques d'Afrique du Nord trouvées en Gaule* (1978), and for the reverse traffic (Gaul to Africa) note the monograph by M. Leglay, *Les Gaulois en Afrique* (1962).

LETTER 69

Contents: Cyprian has been asked his personal view on two questions. The first concerns Novatianist baptism: is it necessary for those once "baptized" by Novatianists to be baptized again when they join the Church, as is the case with other heretics? Cyprian replies:

(i) No distinction is to be drawn between one heresy or schism and another; all are outside, all are antichrists (§1).

(ii) The Church is by definition one, and baptism is confined to that one Church (§2). Novatian has, therefore, to belong to that one Church if he is to have the power to baptize (§3). The Church constitutes the one and only household in which a person may be saved (§4); only those who maintain its unity may possess the graces of its one baptism (§5), and those who break that unity are to be regarded as so many heathens and pagans (§6).

(iii) It is not significant that the externals of the Novatianists' baptismal liturgy are no different from those of the Catholic Church. Not only do they mean different things by the words they use (§7), but the prayers and sacrifices of those who rebel against the Church, and of all associated with them, remain unacceptable to God (§§8 and 9).

(iv) Neither does it help to claim that Novatianists can baptize

but, being in schism, they nevertheless do not impart the Holy Spirit. Baptism forgives sins and sins cannot be forgiven without the power of the Spirit. And by laying hands upon Novatianists when they join the Church, as they do who made this claim, they are demonstrating that they do not possess that Spirit (§§10 and 11).

The second question concerns “clinical” baptism: are sickbed candidates, who are merely sprinkled with baptismal water, to be regarded as legitimate Christians? Cyprian replies:

(i) Spiritual washing is different from physical washing, and where the faith of giver and receiver is complete, there can be no lessening of God’s graces at baptism (§12).

(ii) There is no biblical basis for any such category of “clinics” (§13.1 f.).

(iii) If people really believe that such baptism is void, then let them baptize them again on their recovering health (§13.3).

(iv) But if they believe that such baptism is merely deficient, they fail to understand that it is we who diminish or increase God’s graces by the way we live our lives; those graces are in fact conferred upon all equally (§14).

(v) It is not true that some sick people, after baptism by aspersion, continue to be assailed by their demon. The devil is overpowered by baptismal waters. This does not, however, prevent the devil from returning should the faith of a Christian falter (§§15–16.1).

Date and Circumstances: Though some have canvassed views to the contrary (e.g. Nelke, *Chronologie* 109 ff), there is every reasonable ground for judging this letter to be the first that has come down to us on the baptismal dispute, a question which, though not new, had become acute again throughout the Mediterranean in the aftermath of the Novatianist schism (see intro. pp. 4 ff.). The question, simply put, was: did Novatianists administer valid baptism?

By the time of this letter the debate has been going on for some time; Cyprian can wax indignant at the persistent perversity of Novatianist supporters within the Church (§10.2 cf. §§6.2, 8.3), but the general tenor of the letter is relatively measured and calm, without that shrill tone of personal agitation and intemperate polemic that characterizes some subsequent correspondence (e.g. *Epp.* 73, 74, 75); the dispute has not yet turned bitter. And Cyprian’s views are care-

fully couched as personal reactions only (e.g. §§1.1, 12.1, 17), i.e. before he has conciliar resolutions which corroborate his position; the dispute has not yet gone public (contrast *Epp.* 70, 71.1.1, 72.1.3, 73.1.1 f.). Neither does he resort to previous tradition on the question, or challenge erroneous custom with truth; this suggests that the dispute has not yet raised the claims of rival traditions, their provenance and antiquity (contrast *Epp.* 70.1.2, 71.4.1, 72.3.1, 73.3.1, 73.13.1, 74.1.2, 74.9.2). Moreover, the arguments of the letter are pitched at a very general level; Cyprian is not yet facing an elaborately mounted case in opposition (contrast *Epp.* 73 and 74) and, unlike the other baptismal letters, there is no cross reference to other documents and correspondence (contrast *Epp.* 71.1.1, 71.4.2, 72.1.3, 73.1.1, 74.1.1). We should be, therefore, at a relatively early and less complex stage of the whole affair. All one can conclude is that the letter should be placed somewhere after the death of Cornelius (§3.2; June 253) but before the Council meeting of *Ep.* 70 (? spring 255). Cyprian is addressing a group (via Magnus) whose tradition it is to "rebaptize" converts from heresy but who now wish to make an exception of Novatianists (§1.1). That stands in contrast with the tradition claimed for Stephen (at least as Cyprian presents it, *Ep.* 74.1.2). In all likelihood, therefore, Cyprian appears at this stage conscious of dealing with a merely local, African, issue—where the tradition has been established not to recognize heretical baptism (*Epp.* 70.1.2, 71.4.1, 73.3.1). He does not have to be in conflict with Stephen as well already.

Discussion of the dating of *Ep.* 69 in Nelke, loc. cit.; Ritschl, *De epistulis* 33; Le Moyne, *Rev. bénéd.* 63 (1953) 96; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 25 ff.; Benson 349; Ernst, *Papst Stephan I* 15 f.; Sage 303 ff.

Some of the premises upon which Cyprian's position, and that of his supporters, is founded are worth eliciting, for he at least is not going to budge from them.

(i) The minister of baptism must himself possess the Holy Spirit if he is, via baptism, to remit sins. To break the bonds of charity (by heresy) breaks off possession of the Spirit. No heretic can, therefore, administer baptism. See esp. §§10.2 ff. For Cyprian the bond was tight which linked right teaching and sacramental validity.

(ii) The efficacy of baptism is also partly dependent upon the efficacy of the baptismal waters themselves (whether administered

by aspersion or immersion): no heretical minister, being without the Spirit, has the power to consecrate and sanctify those saving waters. See §15 and *Ep.* 70.1.3. with n. 6 ad loc. comparing *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 5 H.439: *neque enim Spiritus sine aqua separatim operari potest nec aqua sine Spiritu*, and op. cit. 18 H.444: *aqua sacerdotis prece in ecclesia sanctificata abluit delicta*; *Ep.* 74.5.4: *hominem sanctificare aqua sola non potest nisi habeat et Spiritum Sanctum*. This attitude rendered its proponents vulnerable to an objection based on the efficacy of “baptism of blood”; see *Ep.* 73.2.2.

(iii) The gifts of the Spirit, imparted by the minister and those baptismal waters, come en bloc. They are not divisible. In no way can the objective power of the invocation of the Name (by the heretic) impart *some* (but not all) of those gifts. See esp. §§11.3, 14.

(iv) Notwithstanding all the externals of matter and form, the correctness of the faith of the baptizand is also a necessary condition for valid baptism: hold erroneous *fides* and all those externals are rendered valueless (§§7 f., 13.3; cf. *Epp.* 73.4 ff., 75.9.2). Compare Tert. *De bapt.* 15.2 CCL 1.290.

(v) The Persons of the Trinity are indivisible in such a way that no one can put on Christ without also receiving the Holy Spirit (e.g. *Ep.* 74.5 cf. *Ep.* 75.12).

From the outset the issue raised fundamental questions about the definition of the Church and the theology of grace, of the ministry, of the Trinity and of the sacraments. No wonder Cyprian is to feel agitated and menaced when his position on all these issues comes to be assailed simultaneously; even for this letter he has instinctively resorted to his *De unitate* and ransacked that treatise for arguments and relevant texts (a dozen citations and allusions in common) as weapons in defence. And Cyprian's agitation is based not simply on some straightforward and egocentric concern for getting his own point of view to prevail (though by birth and status he was habituated enough that this should be so), but, more fundamentally, on a profoundly felt apprehension for the well-being of his Church: the peril is that of polluting the holy Church by admitting within it those who in fact remain uncleansed from sin by not having been washed in authentic baptismal waters (e.g. §2; cf. esp. *Ep.* 73.19.3). The same fear of pollution lay at the centre of the penitential dispute in the earlier years of the 250s (see *Ep.* 55 intro.). And, once again, Cyprian's

Church shows basic sympathy with the attitudes of its purist opponents (cf. *Ep.* 73.2.1 f.: Novatianists do not recognize others' baptism either).

Cyprian is also confronted with an inquiry about the efficacy of "clinical" baptism (sickbed baptism by aspersion). It is tempting to suspect the inquiry to be not entirely innocent nor without tangential reference to Novatian, for Novatian's claim to the priesthood had been attacked by his rival Cornelius precisely on the grounds that his had been such a sickbed baptism (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.14 f., 17). But it is not necessary to succumb to the temptation; at least Cyprian deals with the matter entirely without reference to Novatian—and with impressive generosity of spirit. The baptismal dispute brought along with it consideration of such a form of baptism, for it helped to determine the minimal requirements for acceptable baptism (cf. the discussion, from a different angle, in *De rebap.* 4 f. CSEL 3.3.73 ff., where the focus is on the absence of the laying-on of hands by a bishop).

About the clinically baptized there hung for long a pall of suspicion and doubt. Cornelius, Cyprian's contemporary, can claim that all of the Roman clergy and many of the Roman laity tried to prevent the ordination of Novatian to the presbyterate on the grounds that it was not permissible (*mē exon*) for one baptized by affusion on a sickbed to be appointed to any clerical rank (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.17) and Cornelius expects Fabius of Antioch, whom he is addressing, to agree with his view. In the first quarter of the next century the Council of Neocaesarea confirmed that a man baptized when ill might not be advanced to the presbyterate, but it did allow for the exception should he display subsequent zeal (*spoudē*) and faith, there being also shortage of men (can. 12, Jonkers, *Acta et symbola* 38; Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.332 f.). Cornelius insinuated that such baptism was occasioned not so much by faith as by the devil who possessed the sick man (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.14), while the Council of Neocaesarea (loc. cit.) less tendentiously observed that in such cases the origin of faith was not choice but necessity. And Cornelius goes on to emphasize that such a ceremony was deficient, in particular it lacked the sealing by the bishop for obtaining the Holy Spirit (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.15), cf. early in the next century Counc. Elvira can. 38, Jonkers, *Acta et symbola* 14, Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.242: *posse*

. . . *fidelem . . . baptizare in necessitate infirmitatis positum catechumenum, ita ut si supervixerit ad episcopum eum perducatur, ut per manus impositionem perfici possit.* Towards the end of that century the Council of Laodicea can. 47, Jonkers, *Acta et symbola* 94, Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.2.1021, is still laying down conditions for subsequent instruction and requiring that those so baptized realize that they have been blessed with heavenly gifts. In their polemics against delaying baptism until deathbed, both Gregory of Nazianzus and Basil of Caesarea can exploit these sentiments of suspicion that hovered over sickbed baptism, the one claiming the gift to be doubtful (*amphibolon*), the other that such baptism is merely the gift of fever (Greg. Naz. *Oratio* 40.11 MG 36.372 f.; Basil *Hom.* 13.5 MG 31.432 ff. at 436). For further studies see Dölger, *AC* 2 (1930) 258 ff.; *DACL* 3 (1948) s.v. "Cliniques" 1942 ff. (H. Leclercq).

Cyprian and his inquirers certainly share with Cornelius the view that the sick are beset with demons (§§15.1 ff). They are also aware with him that the ceremonies for such baptism are cut short (§12.2 *divina compendia*). But, typically, their emphasis on those deficiencies is (unlike Cornelius') not on the bishop's sealing but on the baptismal bathing itself: does *aspersion*, as opposed to bodily washing, suffice? Cyprian's case is designed to allay apprehensions that the physical *washing* is of paramount importance: the faith of giver and receiver and God's *indulgentia* are equally potent factors which determine the efficacy of the baptism. There are, nevertheless, some who are of the view (as held by Cornelius and his Roman contemporaries) that such baptism, while effective, still remains *deficient* (§§13.3 ff). Cyprian's view of the Holy Spirit cannot allow that (§14).

1. *Cyprianus Magno filio* s. Magnus is addressed four times as *fili carissime*: at the beginning (§1.1), at the point of transition to the question of sickbed baptism (§12.1), and in the concluding paragraph and final greeting (§17). That does not establish his position as layman (see e.g. Bishop Eucratius so addressed in *Ep.* 2, with n. 13 ad loc.; it is erroneous to claim that this form of address here is "unique sous la plume de Cyprien," Campeau, *Science et esprit* 22 [1970] 42). The general approach of the letter, however, could be regarded as consistent with Magnus' not being a bishop: Cyprian fails to appeal to Magnus in the guise of one bishop to another, in their key role of

maintaining that oneness which characterizes *the* Church (contrast to Iubaianus in *Ep.* 73.26.2: *servatur a nobis . . . collegii honor . . . concordia sacerdotii*); his use of the first person plural nowhere embraces Magnus as a sacerdotal colleague (contrast to Pompeius in *Ep.* 74.12: *observatur itaque a nobis et tenetur, frater carissime . . . ut* etc., or to Iubaianus in *Ep.* 73.22.3: *qui fidei et veritati praesumus*). But these features only create a possibility, they certainly do not establish Magnus firmly as “un laïque de qualité” (so e.g. Batiffol, *Église naissante* 458). Nevertheless, the phrasing of the concluding paragraph addressed to Magnus (“we lay down no regulation for others: each bishop [*praepositus*] is free to determine his own position for himself”) is strongly suggestive of episcopal rank. Discussion in Bastiaensen 22, Watson 272. No bishop named Magnus happens to be attested for this period in North Africa (von Soden, *Prosopographie* 261 f.).

Magnus had written to Cyprian; that suggests his domicile may have been some distance from Carthage. We glimpse the two major questions his letter raised in §§1.1 and 12.1 (? along with §15.1). This reply of Cyprian’s certainly suggests that these inquiries were couched with open candour; Cyprian does not appear to register any personal threat on reading them, though he can be outraged that they are being entertained (§10.2).

2. Cyprian does not here make explicit a distinction which emerges only later in the baptismal dispute (e.g. *Epp.* 71.2.2, 74.12), viz. of those *qui a Novatiano veniunt*, the difference between those who are apostates, having once been baptized in the Church and then later becoming Novatianists, and those who went through the ceremony of baptism as neophytes with the Novatianists. In this letter Cyprian is concerned with the latter category only.

3. *quantum . . . scripturarum divinarum sanctitas ac veritas suggerit*. Cyprian’s case is to be scripturally based—borne out by the fact that there are some 35 biblical quotations and allusions in this letter. There is no word in this letter of received tradition—a challenge to his position on *that* issue is yet to be made? (Contrast *Epp.* 70.1.2, 71.2.1, 71.3.1, 73.3.1.)

4. *omnes omnino haereticos et schismaticos nihil habere potestatis ac iuris*. While Cyprian can show himself sensitive to distinctions between heresy and schism (see *Ep.* 3 n. 18 and cf. *Epp.* 43 n. 38, 49 n.

10), on this baptismal question he consistently refuses to be drawn into delineating any significant demarcation between the two categories: it is enough for him that they are both *outside*. Novatianists are, therefore, to be regarded no differently from other unorthodox sects (for later preferential treatment see Counc. Nicaea can. 8 Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.576, with commentary and other references, 576 ff.). Cyprian can, however, wax eloquent when opponents to his position appeared to show themselves equally indiscriminating, linking Novatianists with Marcionites, and worse (*Epp.* 73.4.1 f., 74.2.4, 74.7.3, cf. 75.5.2).

5. Matt. 12.30 (cf. Luke 11.23), Fahey 303.

6. 1 John 2.18f., Fahey 530 f.

7. Matt. 18.17, Fahey 313.

8. *nomina adulterata fingentes*. Is this an allusion to the (false) claims of Novatian (and others) to hold the rank of bishop? In similar contexts Cyprian often adds the establishment of a spurious chair (*adultera cathedra*, e.g. *Ep.* 68.2.1), and the present phrase appears to be but a variant for this. Others (e.g. Fahey 654 n. 17) interpret as a reference to the Novatianists' claim to be the church of the saints, spuriously calling themselves the *sancti*, the *mundi* or *katharoi*—though, as it happens, the earliest straightforward attestation for such names seems to be Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.1, but there is wide and abundant evidence for their use thereafter (see Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.576 f. n. 3 for a lengthy catalogue) and they do seem implied earlier, e.g. *Ad Novat.* 2.9f. CCL 4.139 f., and see further *Ep.* 49 n. 13.

9. Cant. 6.8 and 4.12, 15, Fahey 170 f. On Cyprian's exploitation of Cant. 4.12 see Nicotra, *Scuola cattolica* 68 (1940) 380 ff., and on the theme of the *fons signatus* generally see J. Fontaine, *Forschungen zur römischen Literatur* (= Festschrift . . . Büchner) 1.96 ff.

10. *si fons signatus est, neque bibere inde neque consignari potest*. There is play in the use of (*con*)*signo* between the literal sense of “enclose or fasten off with a seal” and the transferred sense of “mark off, in dedication” (with the seal of the Spirit, the sign of the cross, the unction of chrism, etc.). For discussion of the concept in connexion with baptism, see Oulton, *Theology*, March 1947, 86 ff., and Dix, *Theology*, Jan. 1948, 7 ff. Notoriously, sealing with the Spirit was all part of the normal baptismal ceremonies for Cyprian (see e.g. *Epp.*

70.2.2, 73.4.2, 73.9.2), and for one discussion (out of many), Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* 170 ff., esp. 177 f., and see further commentary at *Ep.* 70 n. 9.

11. 1 Pet. 3.20 f., Fahey 522 f. On the ark of Noah (commonly) viewed as a figure of the Church, see Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri* 81 ff.; Lundberg, *Typologie* 73 f.; H. Rahner, *Symbole der Kirche* 504 ff. (esp. 542 f.); Lewis, *A Study of the interpretation of Noah* 162; on the floodwaters interpreted as a type of baptism, Lewis, *op. cit.*, 168 f., and see further *Ep.* 63 n. 8 on the figure of Noah in Cyprian. For Firmilian's reading of this section of *Ep.* 69, see *Ep.* 75.15.

12. *Eph.* 5.25 f., Fahey 490 f.

13. *aut ecclesiae praesidere* (cf. §5.1 *in ecclesia . . . praesidente*, *De unit.* 5 (TR) CCI. 3.252: *episcopi qui in ecclesia praesidemus*). Does Cyprian wish to elicit some of the etymological sense out of his chosen verb (*praesideo*): the bishop, literally, sits in front of his *ecclesia* on the episcopal *cathedra*? See further on the bishop's chair *Epp.* 3 n. 4, 39 n. 26.

14. *Cornelium . . . qui Fabiano episcopo legitima ordinatione successit et quem . . . martyrio quoque Dominus glorificavit*. On Fabian see *Epp.* 9 nn. 4 and 5, 28 n. 5, 59 n. 48. The two features which Cyprian singles out concerning Novatian's rival for the Roman episcopacy, Cornelius, are (i) the legitimacy of his appointment (on that tangled question see *Epp.* 44 *et sqq.*), and (ii) the honour of his martyrdom (on which see *Epp.* 60, 67.6.3, 68.5.1). The latter is included on the ground that the blessing of martyrdom confirms the beneficent approval of God upon Cornelius' episcopate; it is corroborative guarantee of its legitimacy. For this line of argument compare *Ep.* 60.3.2, and consult n. 12 *ad loc.* for further examples.

15. *nemini succedens a se ipso ortus est*. This phrasing (reiterated in §5.1: *nemini succedens et a se ipse incipiens*) encapsulates the essence of Cyprian's opposition to Novatian: his was no *ordinatio succedanea* (§5.1, where see n. 19).

16. *Exod.* 12.46, Fahey 71 f. followed by *Josh.* 2.18 f., Fahey 98 f. and 579 f. (on the figure of Rahab in Cyprian). The texts are introduced by the phrase *de sacramento paschae et agni*: does *sacramentum* mean "sacred meaning," "prophetic figure" (so de Ghellinck et al. 175 ff.), rather than "sacred rite" (as translated, cf. Renaud, *Eucharistie* 42 f.)?

17. *haereticum vitandum esse ut perversum et peccatorem et a semet ipso damnatum*. A free adaptation (unusual for Cyprian, who prefers to quote directly) of Tit. 3.10 f., Fahey 518 f., where his text read *haereticum hominem . . . evita sciens quoniam perversus est huiusmodi et peccat et est a semet ipso damnatus* (Test. 3.78 CCL 3.161, falsely ascribed to Colossians).

18. John 10.30 and 10.16, Fahey 389 f.

19. *manente vero pastore et in ecclesia Dei ordinatione succedanea praesidente*. The *pastor* referred to is most likely to be Cornelius with the participles *manente* and *praesidente* being in the past continuous tense ("while the true shepherd was still there, presiding . . ."); but a reference to one of Cornelius' successors, Lucius or (be it noted) Stephen, would not be impossible either, with the participle being in the present tense. The turn of phrase *ordinatio succedanea* (only this once used by Cyprian) appears to be a variant of the *vicaria ordinatio* of Ep. 66.4.2, where see n. 17, and see further van Beneden, *Aux origines* 113 ff., esp. 116 f.

20. Ps. 67.7, Fahey 143 f. ("one of the most frequently cited scriptural texts in all of Cyprian's writings"). Firmilian echoes the sentiment in Ep. 75.1.1 f.

21. *panem . . . de multorum granorum adunatione congestum, populum nostrum quem portabat indicat adunatum*. For the symbolism placed in this passage upon the composition of bread, compare Ep. 63.13.4 (with n. 32 ad loc.). The clause *quem portabat* has occasioned difficulty, for *porto* in Cyprian may bear the meaning of "figure," "signify" (e.g. *De dom. orat.* 5 CCL 3A.92: *Anna . . . ecclesiae typum portans*, Watson 254); hence the words have been translated variously "we, his people, whom it [= the bread] signified" (Wiles and Santer, *Documents in Early Christian Thought* 163) or "our people, of whom he was himself the figure" (Greenslade, *Early Latin Theology* 153). However, Ep. 63.13.1, in what is a closely parallel context, strongly suggests that here *porto* should have a less transferred sense, for there Cyprian writes with unmistakable literalness: *nos omnes portabat Christus qui et peccata nostra portabat*, and see n. 31 ad loc. for discussion and further parallels, Renaud, *Eucharistie* 252 ff., adding Bayard, *Le latin* 90 ff., on Cyprian's use of *porto* and its biblical origins.

22. 2 Kings 17.20 f., Fahey 108.

23. See 1 Kings 13.1 ff. for the story of Ahijah the prophet and Jeroboam (Fahey 583 f.).

24. *cum quibus nec terrestris ** nec saecularis potus debeat esse communis*. Ahijah was forbidden in the company of schismatics *panem edere* and *aquam bibere*; the Church likewise cannot share with schismatics *aquam salutarem* and *gratiam caelestem*. Concinnity leads us to anticipate a parallel pair of nouns in this concluding clause; hence Hartel indicates a lacuna (which some editors have filled with *cibus*). But the focus on baptism (of water) makes any such addition unrequired.

25. Matt. 10.5, Fahey 293. The passage relies for much of its point on the linguistic fact that for Cyprian's Christian readers *gentiles* could mean both (i) Gentiles (i.e. non-Jews) and (ii) pagans (i.e. non-Christians). He signals this convenient ambiguity by introducing his argument with the description of Samaritans as being classed *inter profanos et gentiles*. Hence Cyprian can arrive at the identification of contemporary schismatics with pagans.

26. *eodem symbolo quo et nos baptizare*. An important passage as it provides the earliest use of the word *symbolum* in connection with the "Creed." The overall sense of the passage is clear enough: there is nothing untoward in the general liturgical formulae and actions which Novatianists employ for their baptismal ceremony. But, Cyprian contends, that conformity will still not validate their sacrament. However, there does remain some obscurity over Cyprian's use here of the word *symbolum* (= pact, pledge of faith, covenant, etc.), which, at least later, came to mean technically a verbal profession of faith, a credal formula, a creed (see Blaise s.v. "symbolum"; earliest clear example perhaps Council of Arles can. 8 Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.285: *interrogent eum symbolum*, and see the excursus on the word in Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* 52 ff.). But the way in which Cyprian uses the word here (*symbolo . . . baptizare*) and later in this same section (*symboli legem*) suggests that he is not thinking exclusively of a verbal declaration but of the general baptismal ceremony which altogether constitutes a pledge of faith and which certainly does include some binding verbal responses (see next n.); the baptismal washing is as integral a part of that performance as the verbal affirmations that accompany it. This interpretation would also accommodate the usage in the closely parallel *Ep.* 75.11.1: *cui nec sym-*

bolum Trinitatis nec interrogatio legitima et ecclesiastica defuit (= triple declaration of belief in the persons of the Trinity accompanied by triple immersion = pledge to the Trinity?).

For some discussions of the early *symbolum*, Chapelle, *Rev. bénéd.* 39 (1927) 33 ff.; and *Rech. théol. anc.* 2 (1930) 5 ff.; Lebreton, *Rech. sc. relig.* 20 (1930) 97 ff.; Badcock, *Rev. bénéd.* 45 (1933) 3 ff.; Carpenter, *JTS* 44 (1943) 4 ff.; Saxer, *Vie liturgique* 123 ff.; Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* 46 ff., 52 ff. The attempt by W. Yorke Fausset in *Novat. de Trinit.* intro xxvi to reconstruct Novatian's baptismal "creed" is not very persuasive. Firmilian (*Ep.* 75.10.5 ff.) confirms the reading here that Novatianists were impeccably orthodox in the externals of their baptismal proceedings.

27. *videatur interrogatione baptismi a nobis non discrepare*. It is clear that Cyprian's ceremony of baptism included questions put by the officiating minister and a formal response from the candidate (= *interrogatio*). Just before approaching the water a set of inquiries were posed; they appear to have included at least a renunciation of the world (plus the devil, his pomp, and his angels?)—see the Cyprianic texts assembled at *Ep.* 11 n.7 and compare especially Tert. *De coron.* 3.2 f. CCL 2.1042, *De spect.* 4.1 CCL 1.231—and §7.2 here may reveal an actual example of these preliminary inquiries and the form in which they were couched ("Do you believe in the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting through the holy Church?", eliciting presumably the simple response of *Credo*). Following that, and more importantly, while the candidate stood in the actual waters of the baptismal *lavacrum*, the Trinitarian formula given here (and compare closely *Ep.* 73.4.2) suggests that a triple set of questions were put to the candidate of the type "Do you believe in God the Father?" with the curt response *Credo*, each question probably being followed by a baptismal immersion; cf. Tert. *De coron.* 3.3 CCL 2.1042: *ter mergitamur . . . respondentes*). It is likely that the question of §7.2 is in fact to be located during this central part of the ceremony (this is suggested by the brisk summary of the *interrogatio* in *Ep.* 73.4.2: *si eundem Patrem, eundem Filium, eundem Spiritum Sanctum, eandem ecclesiam confitentur* and corresponds with the evidence for baptismal liturgies, e.g. Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 21 ed. Botte 86: *credis in spiritu sancto et sanctam ecclesiam . . . ?*). There is widespread contemporary evidence for this usage of the baptismal *interrogatio*: Dionysius of Alexandria *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.9.2

("having been present with those who were recently being baptized and having heard the questions and answers"; cf. idem, *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.8.1: "[Novatian] sets at nought the holy washing, perverting the faith and confession that precede it"); Origen *In Num. hom.* v MG 12.603 (*interrogationum et responsionum quis facile explicet rationem*); Firmilian *Ep.* 75.10.5 ff., *De rebapt.* 10 CSEL 3.3.81: *interrogantes a respondentibus audierint quod minime ita interrogari aut responderi debet*; *Sent. episc.* LXXXVII 1 H.437: *sacramentum interrogat*, etc. For discussion see references in previous note; most of the relevant early evidence is assembled and ably discussed by Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* 40 ff. ("The Baptismal Interrogations"). There is a useful collection of documents in Whittaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* 1 ff. On the tripartite baptismal formula see also Bindley, *Expositor* 17 (1919) 463 f.; Whittaker, *Ch. Quart. Rev.* 161 (1960) 346 ff.; Wolfson, *Philosophy of the Church Fathers* 1.141 ff.; von Campenhausen, *VC* 25 (1971) 12 ff.

28. Novatianists could hardly be expected to be moved by this argument. After all, they claimed to be the Christian gathering which upheld the holiness of the Church: they were the ones who formed the *sancta ecclesia*. Cyprian repeats this formula of the baptismal *interrogatio* and this argument in *Ep.* 70.2.1; *sancta* does not therefore appear to be an *ad hoc* addition for particular effect against Novatianists but the standard phrasing of the *symboli lex* (*per sanctam ecclesiam*). Compare the apocryphal *Epistula apostolorum* 5 tr. M. R. James 487, which appears to reflect such baptismal formulation: "What *mean* these five loaves? They are the symbol of our faith in the Lord of the Christians (in the great Christendom), *even* in the Father, the Lord Almighty, and in Jesus Christ our redeemer, in the Holy Ghost the comforter, in the holy Church, and in the remission of sins."

29. The reference is to Num. 16.1 ff., on which see Fahey 84 f. and 574 ff. Cyprian's description of Core, Dathan, and Abiron (*loci sui ministerium transgressi*; cf. *Ep.* 3.1.2: *tres de ministeriis*) would have apposite linguistic echoes as a reference to the *presbyter* Novatian and the other clerical ministers who joined his following.

30. Num. 16.40, Fahey 85 (erroneously identifying the passage as Num. 17.5).

31. *cathedram sibi constituere et primatum adsumere*. *Primatus* in Cyprian brings along with it overtones not only of "powers of author-

ity,” “primacy,” but also “privileges of primogeniture,” “birthright,” “claims of legitimate succession” (thus, in the plural, *Ep.* 73.25.3: *cum in Genesi Esau primatus suos inde perdiderit*; *De bon. pat.* 19 CCL 3A. 129: *Esau . . . primatus suos. . . amisit*). Hence Cyprian is repeating his attack on Novatian as a “self-starting bishop,” being in succession to no one (cf. n. 15 above): Cornelius was rightfully appointed to the vacant chair and its powers *first*. For discussion Bévenot, *JTS* 5 (1954) 23 f.

32. Num. 16.26, Fahey 84 f. Note Moses is being cast as the type of bishop; on that theme see Pietri, *Roma christiana* 315 ff.

33. Hos. 9.4, Fahey 243 f.

34. *nec baptizare omnino eos posse qui non habeant spiritum sanctum*. In the argument which follows it is clear that in Cyprian’s mind it was an integral part of the same process not only to have sins forgiven (by baptism) but also to receive (sc. in full) the Holy Spirit. (On Cyprian’s notion of the completeness of the Holy Spirit and the indivisibility of His *operatio*, see Réveillaud, *Stud. patr.* 6 [1962] 181 ff.). Cyprian exploits the fact (§11.3) that opponents of his view do lay hands upon Novatianists when they join the Church, but he fails to discern sharply whether the imposition of hands may be for the forgiveness of sins (*in paenitentiam*) or rather for receiving gifts of the Spirit (*ad accipiendum spiritum sanctum*). His view of the baptismal process (as well as of the ministry of grace and of the Holy Spirit) did not allow any such distinctions and divisions to be drawn. For a clear exposition Bévenot, *Hey. Journ.* 19 (1978) 124 ff.

35. John 20.21 ff., Fahey 403 f.

36. Allusion to Luke 1.15 (cf. Fahey 603 f.). Despite this argument here, Cyprian later draws attention to the distinction between Christian baptism and the baptism given by John in *Ep.* 73.24.3 (cf. Firmilian *Ep.* 75.8.1 f., 14.3 f., and contrast *De rebap.* 2 CSEL 3.3.71 f.). The baptism of John continued to be a source of contention: e.g. Eulogius (patriarch of Alexandria in late sixth century) expatiated at length on the question in his extensive writings against Novatianists: Photius *Biblioth.* 280 p. 537b et sqq.

37. *quando iam utique acceptus sit ubi si fuit dari potuit*. There is strong MSS suggestion that *illic* should be read before *acceptus*: that would make it unambiguous that *ubi* should mean “where” rather than “when.” Cyprian adds the point here, viz. that his (Catholic)

opponents do lay hands upon Novatianists when they join the Church, as a mere tailpiece. It is later to figure as a central issue of contention (contrast *Epp.* 73 and 74).

38. *aqua salutari non loti sint sed perfusi*. The African archeological evidence closest in time to Cyprian would suggest that a candidate for baptism characteristically stepped down (by two or three steps) into a waist-deep (or shallower) pool and there stood while water was poured over him during the ceremony; this happens to be the manner also generally depicted in surviving pictorial representations of baptism. Hence, here, normal candidates are *loti*, "washed," "bathed." The dimensions of most baptismal fonts would in fact have made complete *submersion* difficult or well-nigh impossible. If a "church house" was in use, the domestic *impluvium*, or internal courtyard pool, would have served equally well. By contrast with such thoroughgoing, bodily washing, in the case of sickbed baptism the candidate (head only?) was merely sprinkled (*aspargi*, §12.3) with water, or he had water poured onto his head (*perfusi* here).

Among the generous bibliographies on African baptisteries and the subject of baptismal immersion, consult Rogers, *Stud. bib.* 5 (1903) 239 ff.; Gsell, *Les monuments antiques* 2.152 ff.; Khatchatrian, *Les baptistères* 27 ff.; Vaultrin, *Basiliques* 124 ff. ("Les baptistères de Carthage"); Davies, *Architectural Setting* 1 ff.; DACL 2 (1925) *s.v.* "Baptistère" 459 ff. and DACL 7 (1926) *s.v.* "Immersion" 305 ff. (H. Leclercq); RAC 1 (1950) *s.v.* "Baptisterium" 1157 ff. (F. W. Deichmann); and for illustrations of the rite of baptism, L. de Bruyne, *L'imposition* 212 ff. On the question of "clinical" baptism, here raised. see the intro. to this letter.

39. *nec minus aliquid illic posse contingere ubi plena et tota fide et dantis et sumentis accipitur*. Note the implications for Cyprian's doctrine of grace: the minister (*dans*) must himself possess that which he is to impart to the recipient (*sumens*)—and the Spirit is so imparted *non de mensura* (cf. §14.1 below). For comment and parallels in Cyprian see *Epp.* 10 n. 18, 64 n. 10, and the dissertation of Navickas, *Doctrine of Cyprian on the Sacraments*, esp. 97 ff. Cyprian rounds off his argument by repeating this opening premise in §12.3 *ad fin.*

40. *et solio et piscina opus est*. *Solium* may refer to a (one-person) bathtub or to a seat (the general meaning of the word) within larger-scale baths (*piscina* here), many such baths being found in fact with

seating around the sides (e.g. the *frigidarium* of the Stabian baths of Pompeii has such a seat running around the basin, some ten inches off the bottom, and cf. Suet. *Aug.* 82.2: "when he had to use hot salt-water and sulphur baths for his rheumatism, he contented himself with sitting on a wooden bath-seat [*ligneo solio*] . . . plunging in his hands and feet in turns"). Baptisteries can also be found with such seats (e.g. the north end of the baptistery of the church at Dura appears to have been equipped with a *solium*, Kraeling, *Final Report* 8.2 Plate xiii; the round baptistery at Tabessa has twelve seats [to match the twelve apostles?], E. Serey de Roch, *Libyca* 1 [1953] 288 ff.), and see Stommel, *JAC* 2 (1959) 5 ff., on the general evidence for sitting during the baptismal rite.

41. *totum credentibus conferunt divina compendia*. By this obscure phrasing Cyprian appears to be referring to the abbreviated ceremonial (= *compendia*) of sickbed baptism, lacking as it does full ritual washing in the sanctified waters of baptism in particular, §12.3 (for the blessing of the waters cf. *Ep.* 70.1.3 with n. 6 ad loc.). Failure to be anointed with chrism (cf. *Ep.* 70.2.2) or failure to have a *bishop* lay hands upon the sickbed candidate (given the emergency circumstances, cf. Tert. *De bapt.* 17.1 ff. CCL 1.291) do not figure as central objections in Cyprian's response (contrast the argument of *De rebap.* 4 f. CSEL 3.3.73 ff.).

42. *aspargi vel perfundi videntur aegri*. See n. 40 above: it is clear that failure actually to be washed (*loti*) in the baptismal *lavacrum* was popularly felt to constitute the major objection to sickbed baptism.

43. Ezek. 36.25 f., Fahey 232, followed by Num. 19.8 with 19.12 f., Num. 8.5 ff., and finally Num. 19.9, Fahey 83 f. This is a notable Cyprianic attempt to justify a thoroughly New Testament practice from exclusively Old Testament texts.

44. *nisi forte qui plura et secretiora legerunt, apud Hippocratem vel Soranum clinicos istos deprehenderunt*. Cyprian's argument here is to be that *clinici* do not constitute any *biblically*-based category (the word being derived from the Greek *klinē*, a bed, and *clinicus* being properly a term for a physician). He cites accordingly the father of Greek medical science, the celebrated physician Hippocrates of Cos (fl. second half of fifth century B.C.), about whose name clusters the voluminous Hippocratic corpus of medical writings (ed. Littré in ten volumes). And Soranus of Ephesus was one of the most celebrated physicians

in (for Cyprian) modern times, viz. in the Early Empire (period of Trajan and Hadrian); of his writings (almost 20 books in number are known) there are preserved to us in Greek four books on gynecology and obstetrics and some fragments of a surgical treatise. Tertullian drew on him extensively for his *De anima*. See PW 3A.1 (1927) s.v. "Soranos" 1113 ff. (Kind); Diels, *Doxographi graeci* (1965 repr.) 207 ff.; Waszink intro. to Tert. *De anim.* 21*ff. It is a standard rhetorical procedure to illustrate an argument with instances ancient and then modern, cf. Min. Fel. *Oct.* 7.5 with n. 96 ad loc. in ACW 39.202.

There is here an overtone of disapproval of such wordly philosophical learning—as Cyprian has already employed against Novatian himself (see *Ep.* 55 nn. 69 ff. and cf. *Ep.* 60.3.1).

45. Allusion to John 5.5 ff. (cf. Matt. 9.2 ff., Mark 2.1 ff., Luke 5.18 ff.), Fahey 292.

46. *cur in fide sua et Domini indulgentia scandalizentur?* Behind this problem there obviously lay great general reluctance to *repeat* the baptismal ceremony once it had been performed, in however abbreviated and incomplete a fashion that may have been. Baptism (of water) was in its essence a once-only rite of initiation.

47. *spiritus sanctus non de mensura datur sed super credentem totus infunditur*. For parallels in Cyprian for this pneumatological viewpoint, see the references in n. 39 above (Cyprian is alluding to John 3.34, Fahey 377). Cyprian's firm position compounded his difficulties in appreciating any notion of *supplementing* (incomplete) benefits conferred by heretical baptism (as advocated e.g. by the author of the treatise *De rebaptismate* 10 ff. CSEL 3.3.82 ff.).

48. Allusion to Exod. 16. 4 ff., esp. v. 18 (omitted by Fahey).

49. *sine acceptione personae*: added perhaps as a borrowing from Rom. 2.11 (and other passages), Fahey 425, and cf. *Ep.* 64 n. 11. The language is discussed by Bayard, *Le latin* 92 f.

50. Allusions to the sower and his seed from Matt. 13.3 ff. (or Mark 4.3 ff.), Fahey 305 f., and see *Ep.* 76.6.2 with n. 19 ad loc. for further use by Cyprian of this parable, and then to the labourers in the vineyard, Matt. 20.10, Fahey 319.

51. *quidam de his qui aegri baptizantur spiritibus adhuc immundis temptabantur*. It is difficult to believe that Hartel's choice of *baptizantur* (as opposed to the also attested *baptizabantur*) can be right, given the following *temptabantur*. The argument is, of course, based on the

widely-held view in antiquity that physical malady was due to demonic possession: this emerges quite explicitly in Cyprian's capitulation of his reply to this objection in §16.1. For comment on this prevalent attitude see n. 438 on Min. Fel. *Oct.* 27.2 in ACW 39.316 f., and see further L. de Bruyne, *L'imposition* 173 f., on the closely related motif of "Christus medicus." A contemporary and (in this context) apposite illustration comes from Cornelius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.14 on the circumstances of Novatian's baptism: "The occasion of his acceptance of the faith was Satan, who resorted to him and dwelt in him for a long time. While he was being healed by the exorcists, having fallen into a grievous sickness, and being considered to be all but dead, he received baptism by affusion on the very bed [*klinē*] on which he lay. . . ."

52. Exod. 14.27 f.; discussion in Fahey 577 and see Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri* 131 ff., Lukken, *Original Sin* 261 f. on the typology of the Red Sea as a prefiguration of baptism.

53. 1 Cor. 10.1 f. and 10.6, Fahey 455 f.

54. *per exorcistas . . . flagelletur et uratur et torqueatur diabolus*. On exorcists as a separate clerical grade by Cyprian's day, see *Ep.* 23 n. 6: if Cyprian is referring to prebaptismal exorcisms, as seems most probable in this context, then this task is no longer being executed by the bishop (as e.g. in Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 20 ed. Botte 78) but by specific clerics. For this description of the effects of the invocation of the Name (*voce humana et potestate divina*) by the exorcist upon the possessing demon, compare *Ad Donat.* 5 CCL 3A.6, *Ad Demet.* 15 CCL 3A.43: *quando a nobis adiurantur, torquentur spiritalibus flagris et verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus eiciuntur, quando heulantes et gementes voce humana et potestate divina flagella et verbera sentientes . . .*, and for further parallels and literature see n. 442 on Min. Fel. *Oct.* 27.5 in ACW 39.318. On the whole topic of baptism and exorcism see the monograph by Dölger, *Der Exorcismus*.

55. *cum . . . ad aquam salutarem . . . venit*. Cyprian's choice of verb (*venit*) alludes to his technical use of *veniens* = neophyte, the catechumen (*audiens*) now approaching baptism. Cf. n. 60 below and *Ep.* 70.3.1: *nec baptizare venientem potest*; Janssen 41 ff.; Watson 263; Bayard, *Le latin* 182; Reicke, *Disobedient Spirits* 194, 217 f. Cyprian fastidiously avoids the foreignism *proselytus*, Tertullian's equivalent.

56. *si scorpia et serpentes qui in sicco praevalent, in aquam praecipitati*

praevalere possunt. The association of scorpions and serpents with desert areas is proverbial: cf. Tert *De bapt.* 1.2 CCL 1.277: *nam fere viperæ et aspidēs ipsique reguli serpentes arida et inaquosa sectantur* (versus Christian *pisciculi*!). Pliny *N.H.* 11.30.88 also stresses that hot, dry conditions make a scorpion's venom most potent; cf. Tert. *Scorp.* 1.2 CCL 2.1069: *familiare periculi tempus aestas*. Cyprian's imagery here may well be influenced by Matt. 12.43 or Luke 11.24 (the unclean spirit which walks abroad *per loca arida* or *per loca inaquosa* [Vulgate]); and on the symbolism of the serpent in connexion with baptism note the long history in literature and iconography traced by Puech, *Cahiers archéologiques* 4 (1949) 17 ff.; cf. RAC 4 (1959) s.v. "Drache" 238 ff. (Merkelbach). There is a negative version of the text found (*si . . . praevalere non possunt* etc.) which is more readily construed, but the *lectio difficilior*, here translated, appears to be better attested.

57. *scorpii et serpentes . . . per nos data a Domino potestate calcantur*. Cyprian is alluding to Luke 10.19 (Vulgate text: *ecce dedi vobis potestatem calcandi supra serpentes et scorpiones et supra omnem virtutem inimici*), omitted by Fahey, and see *Ep.* 39 n. 12 for parallels of this imagery.

58. *laudabiles ac probabiles in ecclesia vivunt plusque per dies singulos in augmentum caelestis gratiae . . . proficiant*. Perhaps there is a passing allusion to Luke 2.52 (Vulgate text: *et Iesus proficiebat sapientia aetate et gratia apud Deum et homines*). The connection between deliverance from unclean spirit and recovery from illness is here explicit; cf. n. 51 above. Hence in Hippol. can. 24.199 f. ed. Achelis 117, bishops are especially enjoined to visit and pray over the sick for their recovery: *reconvalescit a morbo quando episcopus ad eum venit, imprimis si super eo orat, quia umbra Petri sanavit infirmum* ("and the sick man recovers from his illness when the bishop visits him, especially if he prays over him, because the shadow of Peter cured the sick man").

59. *spiritu immundo redeunte quatiuntur*. Cyprian uses language as suitable for the spasms and seizures of fever as it is for the paroxysms of the diabolically possessed. One is left wondering what psychological effect this view of illness and possession must have had on Christians who were plagued with ill-health.

60. *venientes non interrogentur . . . utrumne clinici an peripatetici*. Cyprian sneers again at the worldly philosophical pretensions of Novatian and his followers (*peripatetici*)—compare n. 44 above—at the same time as he makes verbal play on the etymology of *Peripatetici* (=

the Walkers) versus the *clinici* (= the bedridden). For a similar joke on *peripateticus* cf. Seneca *Ep.* 29.6 (the philosopher Aristo *qui in gestatione disserebat*), and for discussion see A. Goulon, REAug 19 (1973) 39 ff., who compares Lact. *Div. inst.* 3.8.10 CSEL 19.194: *privatorem doloris summum bonum putare non plane Peripateticorum aut Stoicorum, sed clinicorum philosophorum est*. Some (but no profound) awareness of Greek is implied; cf. *Ep.* 60 n. 11 (on *philosophiae . . . sophiae*). Cyprian here also plays verbally, with pointed irony, on the technical use of *venientes* and *interrogo* in baptismal contexts: see nn. 27 and 55 above.

61. *unusquisque praepositus actus sui rationem Domino redditurus*. For discussion of this notably Cyprianic line on episcopal autonomy, see *Ep.* 55 n. 95 and cf. Hebr. 13.17: *ipsi [praepositi] enim pervigilant quasi rationem pro animabus vestris reddituri*; despite the vehemence with which Cyprian is hotly to fight in defence of his position on this issue of "rebaptism," he continued to repeat his formula of toleration in *Epp.* 72.3.2, 73.26.1, *Sent. episc LXXXVII praef.* H. 436. It was not incompatible with the most strenuous efforts and intense politicking to convince others of their erroneous ways (cf. Chadwick, "The Role of the Christian Bishop" 3). One might compare J. S. Mill as a publicist of the mid-Victorian era: despite his avowals of liberalism and his profession of pluralism, he showed himself rabidly partisan on most issues of the day.

62. Rom. 14.12 f., Fahey 438.

LETTER 70

Contents: Thirty-two bishops respond jointly to a letter of inquiry sent by 18 of their colleagues. They seek an opinion on the question whether those who come from heresy must be baptized. The bishops respond that they, and their inquirers, have adhered to the rule laid down by their predecessors. They must know that the water for baptismal cleansing cannot be sanctified by the unclean heretic, that sins cannot be remitted in baptism by the sinful heretic, and that the oil for the baptismal anointing cannot be consecrated upon the heretic's counterfeit altar. No action of the heretic can be holy, no part of his

baptism can have validity. Therefore, all who come from heresy must receive the full ceremonies of baptism.

Date and circumstances: In the series of letters *Epp.* 70–75, *Ep.* 70 appears to come first. For copies of *Ep.* 70 were enclosed with *Ep.* 71 (§1.1) and *Ep.* 72 (§1.3) and *Ep.* 73 in turn enclosed copies of *Epp.* 70 and 71 (§1.1). *Ep.* 74, in all probability, refers to a reply by Stephen to *Ep.* 72 and certainly to other letters on the baptismal question (§1.1). And there are clear echoes of *Ep.* 70 in the *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* of Sept. 256: see Ernst, *Papst Stephan* 51 n. 3, for a tabulation. *Ep.* 70 is, therefore, to be placed after *Ep.* 69 (where see intro.) but before *Ep.* 71.

Controls over the precise year, however, in which this assembly of 32 bishops was held are not so tight. At the meeting of Sept. 1, 256, the contents of *Ep.* 73 were read out (*Sent. episc. LXXXVII proem.* H. 435). That letter (*Ep.* 73) refers to a recent meeting of 71 bishops (§1.2) as well as to an earlier Council (§1.1). If we assume that that meeting attended by 71 was held in spring 256, then this present (earlier) Council could well have assembled a year before, in spring 255. Nevertheless, the spring meeting of 254 is not altogether precluded as a possibility—unless it is assumed that Pope Stephen is (indirectly) aimed at in this letter: his election would have been taking place about the same time as a post-Easter meeting in 254. All one can say is that the contents of the letter do not disclose preoccupations with ideas that can be especially identified as Stephen's (not a word e.g. about the laying-on of hands). If there was already an international disagreement, we do not have the evidence for discerning it in this letter. Neither is the tone urgent or agitated; we do not have the grounds for positing any special (autumn) session, whether in 254 or 255.

What the contents do disclose is an emphasis upon the role of *bishops* in the baptismal ceremonies. That is hardly surprising. After all, bishops are addressing bishops. We read, accordingly, of the essential functions that bishops perform in valid baptism. They are required to hallow the baptismal waters (§1.3); they officiate at the altar where the baptismal chrism is consecrated (§2.2); being holy, they have the power to sanctify the unholy (§2.3)—all beyond the capabilities of a sacrilegious minister whose baptism is, therefore, completely without merit (§3.2).

The Numidian bishops who receive this letter appear to be receiving the sort of document they could display before fellow bishops inclined to concede some efficacy to heretical baptism (cf. *De rebap.*). They may indeed have sent in their joint inquiry not so much wishing that the question should be explored profoundly and afresh (this they do not get), but rather seeking to elicit a reassuring and supportive document (as they now receive), bearing as it does the authority of 32 episcopal signatures. This they could now disseminate among any concessively-inclined colleagues.

A Greek translation of this letter has been preserved along with fragments of Syriac and Armenian versions: see Dekkers, *Sacris erudiri* 5 (1953) 197 and n. 3.

For discussion, especially on the dating, Monceaux, *Rev. de phil., de litt. et d'hist. anc.* 24 (1900) 338 f.; Harnack, *Geschichte* 2.2.357 f.; Nelke, *Chronologie* 90 f.; Ritschl, *De epistulis* 70 f.; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 26 f.; von Soden, *Briefsammlung* 29 f.

1. The 18 addressees of this letter are conveniently identified for us in *Ep.* 72.1.3: they are fellow bishops from Numidia (*coepiscopos in Numidia praesidentes*). Of these 18 bishops, six only appear to have been present to cast their *sententiae* at the September meeting of 256, viz. Januarius (see *Ep.* 62 n. 1), one of the two Saturnini, one of the two Victors, Cassius, Nemesianus (see *Epp.* 62 n. 1, 76 n. 1), and Rogatianus (see *Ep.* 3 n. 1). However, the existence of homonymous bishops makes it impossible to compute the precise number. There is also an Honoratus among these 18 bishops as well as in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*, but the latter Honoratus (*Sent.* 77 H. 458) should be excluded from the calculation; his see was probably proconsular and he figures here rather among the senders of this letter—see *Epp.* 57 n. 1, 62 n. 1. Moreover, five *further* names of these 18 recur among the (Numidian) list of bishops to whom *Ep.* 62 is addressed, viz. Proculus, Maximus, Modianus, Nampulus, and Honoratus. (In fact, all eight addressees of that letter appear again in the present list.) In addition, the name Eutychianus figures in a message from Numidian bishops (*Ep.* 79.1.2 ad fin., with n. 8 ad loc.) and on Antonianus see *Ep.* 55 n. 1. Nothing is known of the remainder, viz. Cittinus, Gargilius I and II, and (probably) one each of the Saturnini and of the Victors.

Of the six cases where the sees are identified with some degree of certainty (Januarius a Lambese, Saturninus a Victoriana, Victor ab Octavu, Cassius a Macomadibus, Nemesianus a Thubunas, and Rogatianus a Nova), a precise location is securely known for three only (viz. Lambaesis, Tobna [Thubunae]—on these two see *Ep.* 62 n. 1—and Macomades = Henchir el Merkeb [Mrikeb-Thala], some 80 km to the NE of Lambaesis). To judge from this sample—and it is a very thin one—we appear to have bishops hailing from the more southwesterly districts of Numidia, clustering around Lambaesis. It is possible, therefore, that we have represented here a regional group within Numidia rather than clear evidence for a separately-held all-Numidian church Council (though we might deduce that a separate church grouping is in the course of formation, to be formalized by the following century: cf. *Ep.* 48 n. 15; cf. Y. Duval, *MEFR* 96 (1984) 516 f.; Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.11 f., 3.8 f.: at least 25 Numidian bishops could be present in Carthage in Sept. 256). Their remote locations made it unattractive for these bishops to journey to Carthage with any frequency. But they have taken the trouble to meet locally together over a common issue and, as we can see occurring on other occasions (see next n.), they have written a joint letter raising a question to appear on the agenda of the coming (post-Easter) Council meeting in Carthage (cf. *Ep.* 56.3). To do that, they will have had to meet some time in advance of the Carthaginian gathering.

Some scholars conjecture that these bishops absented themselves from that gathering not wishing to be lashed by Cyprian's oratory into subjection and conformity. But some six of them did actually make the special journey to vote along with Cyprian in September 256, and on their own testimony they themselves had not disagreed with Cyprian on the question (§1.2). It is wiser to deduce, therefore, that they were concerned for the Church, *pro communi dilectione* (§1.2), i.e. for the consequences of views adopted by some of their colleagues who were prepared to concede *some* efficacy to heretical baptism (§3.1 f.).

There can be little ground for quarreling over the general provenance of the senders of the letter. (There is strong manuscript support for making their number 32, instead of Hartel's 31, with a Januarius appearing between the first Saturninus and Marcus.) Of these 32 names, all but eight or nine reappear at the meeting of Sep-

tember 256 (homonyms again preclude precision: Rogatianus, assumed to be Numidian above, is a cause for uncertainty). Thus we have the names of at least 23 sees, and of these 23 sites the general location of all but one of them can be identified with fair confidence: they are all proconsular. (Exception, Cibaliana for Bishop Donatus: *Sent. episc.* 55 H. 454; DHGE 12 [1953] *s.v.* "Cibaliana" 823 [J. Ferron]; Maier, *L'épiscopat* 132—but there are two bishops named Donatus in the predominantly proconsular list of bishops who sent *Ep.* 57, where see n. 1). The names of the remaining bishops (who are without a known see) are Liberalis, Caldonius, Marutius, Lucianus, Herculanus, Tertullus, a second Donatus, Rogatianus, and one Saturninus. All these names figure again in the (presumed proconsular) list of *Ep.* 57, and see further *Ep.* 4 n. 1 (on Tertullus), *Ep.* 24 n. 1 (on Caldonius), *Ep.* 41 n. 1 (on Herculanus), *Ep.* 48 n. 4 (on Liberalis). The convergence of evidence is strong for a predominantly, if not exclusively, proconsular gathering of bishops which generated this letter.

For discussion Benson 572 ff.; Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.45 f.; von Soden, *Prosopographie* 256 f.; Maier, *L'épiscopat* (index of bishops, 249 ff.).

2. *legimus litteras vestras quas fecistis*. For the reading out of correspondence before the assembled Council, compare *Sent. Episc. LXXXVII praef.* H. 435 (letter from Iubaianus, Cyprian's reply [= *Ep.* 73], and Iubaianus' response to Cyprian's reply); *Ep.* 64 (letter of Fidus); *Ep.* 67 (letter from the Spanish communities); no doubt both *Ep.* 56 and the letter from the six bishops which occasioned it were read out at the Council meeting (of 253?) which was shortly to follow (*Ep.* 56.3). Little can be gathered about the contents of this (lost) letter; the bishops apparently stated that they have adhered to the practice of "rebaptism" hitherto (§1.2), and §3.1 f. suggests that the possibility of partial efficacy of heretical baptism was raised (cf. *Ep.* 69.10.2). There is no specific mention of Novatianists as a special category (contrast *Ep.* 69.1.1); it would appear that the bishops' inquiry was couched in broad terms of general principle. See further Harnack, *Über verlorene Briefe* 41.

3. *et ipsi illic veritatem et firmitatem catholicae regulae teneatis*. *Illic* refers to the bishops' locality, viz. Numidia (*Ep.* 72.1.3). With a rhetorical adroitness that is characteristic of Cyprian's pen (though this

is strictly a joint epistle), the language skilfully precludes the possibility of any alteration in policy (*veritatem et firmitatem*) or of countenancing any local variation (*catholicae*). To use both *firmitatem* and *catholicae* is tendentious, for there had indeed been change (see next n.) and there was most certainly variation elsewhere (e.g. *Ep.* 74.1.2 [Rome]). Pope Stephen was later to be sent a copy of this letter (*Ep.* 72.1.3); irate aggravation could only have been expected on its receipt.

4. *sententiam . . . non novam . . . sed iam pridem ab antecessoribus nostris statutam*. Cyprian and his fellow bishops are trying to establish claims to custom as well as to truth (and truth and reason versus custom and tradition is going to emerge as a theme in later development of the debate). They appeal to a Council held in time past (*iam pridem*: on this vague expression in Cyprian see *Ep.* 1 n. 7); when Cyprian's position later comes under severe challenge for novelty of doctrine, he can become much more emphatic on the remoteness of that time past (*anni sint iam multi et longa aetas*, *Ep.* 73.3.1). The Council was held in fact under Bishop Agrippinus, consisting of bishops drawn from Africa Proconsularis as well as Numidia (*Epp.* 71.4.1, 73.3.1, cf. 75.19.3). Augustine can supply a number for the bishops; they tally 70 in *De unico bapt.* 13.22 CSEL 53.21: *de septuaginta praecessoribus Cypriani*, but in *Contra Cresc.* 3.3.3 CSEL 52.412 that number appears to become more approximate: *septuaginta Afris vel aliquanto etiam pluribus*. (One begins to suspect approximation to the biblical model laid down in Numbers 11.16 [Moses and the 70 elders], cf. Frend, *Mélanges M. Simon* 190 f.—or contamination with the Council of *Ep.* 73.1.2 [Cyprian with 70 other bishops]).

There is every reasonable ground to conclude that Agrippinus' Council marked some departure in policy, or at least strove to put an end to diversity in practice. (Tertullian in his [?pre-206] treatise *De baptismo* 15.2 CCL 1.1.290 implies that the question of the validity of heretical baptism had been for some time a matter for uncertainty; he had treated of the issue already, in Greek. His own view was that heretics did not have baptism, cf. *De pudic.* 19.5 CCL 1.2.1320). Firmilian has no doubts that the Africans in fact *changed* practice: *vos dicere Afri potestis cognita veritate errorem vos consuetudinis reliquisse* (*Ep.* 75.19.3). Cyprian admits as much himself in *Ep.* 71.2.1: *Et dicunt se in hoc veterem consuetudinem sequi* (there he pointedly fails, in his re-

joinder, to explain what had been the customary treatment of those baptized by heretics *before* the time of Agrippinus) and again in *Ep.* 73.3.1 (the baptism of those coming from heresy to the true Church is traced, significantly, only from the time of Agrippinus, *exinde in bodiurnum*). By contrast, the author of the contemporary (and most likely African) treatise *De rebaptismate* harps continually on the age-old and hallowed tradition of not repeating baptism (e.g. 1 CSEL 3.3.69: *vetustissima consuetudine ac traditione ecclesiastica*; 1 *ibid.* 70: *priscam et memorabilem cunctorum emeritorum sanctorum et fidelium solemnisssimam observationem*; 15 *ibid.* 89: *custodita praeterea tanti temporis tot virorum veneranda nobis consuetudine et auctoritate*). And Augustine, at any rate, entertained no doubts at all that Cyprian's inherited policy had been but a brief-lived and merely local innovation (*non nisi in sola Africa factum paucis ante se annis Agrippini concilium*), *De bapt. contra Donat.* 4.6.8 CSEL 51.231, cf. *op. cit.* 5.22.30 CSEL 51.288 f. It is indeed remarkable how little the authority of Agrippinus' Council is exploited in the subsequent debate (once only e.g. in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* [4 H. 438: *secundum decretum collegarum nostrorum sanctissimae memoriae virorum*])—*Sent.* 59 and 86 H. 455, 460 [*quod semel decrevimus, quod semel censuimus*] probably refer to immediately prior Councils); to do so too heavily might serve to draw attention to an awkwardly brief pedigree for an ecclesiastical tradition. It was safer to *oppose* blind custom with the latter-day enlightenment of reason and truth (a sentiment repeated no fewer than five times in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 28, 30, 56, 63, 77 H. 447, 448, 454, 456, 458). For a fuller case on the relative novelty of the African practice, see Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.180 ff.

It is reasonable, also, to suggest that the decision taken by Agrippinus' Council did not meet with uniform acceptance just in the same way as some African bishops in the past, against their episcopal colleagues, refused to reconcile adulterers (*Ep.* 55.21.1 f., where see nn. 87 and 93). The swift revival of serious debate within the ranks of the African bishops (as evidenced by *Epp.* 69, 70, 71, 73, and 74) and the mustering of three African Councils which deliberated the question (*Ep.* 70, *Ep.* 73.1.2, and *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*)—to say nothing of the treatise *De rebaptismate*—suggest that differences had survived and have now merely surfaced again.

The occasion of Agrippinus' Council is not known. Conjectures

range (often confidently) all the way from the late second century until the course of the 230s, but there is very little to go on. We do know that debate occurred in the East also *iam pridem* on this anabaptist issue from *Ep.* 75.7.5, where Firmilian refers to a Council held at Iconium (bishops gathering in from Phrygia, Galatia, Cilicia, and neighbouring regions—perhaps the 50 Eastern bishops of Aug. *Contra Cresc.* 3.3.3 CSEL 52.412: *quinquaginta episcopis orientalium*), and by his method of referral (*nos . . . confirmavimus*, *Ep.* 75.7.5; *plurimi . . . tractavimus et confirmavimus*, *Ep.* 75.19.4) he strongly implies that he was present himself. That should allow a date for the Iconium Council in the 230s but not too much earlier (Eusebius begins Firmilian's *floruit* in the reign of Severus Alexander, 222–35, *H.E.* 6.26 f.; he died in 268, *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.30.4 f.). Cyprian's exact contemporary, Dionysius of Alexandria *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.7.5 confirms that the debate was held “long before” (*pro pollou*) and that it occurred “in the most populous churches and at synods of the brethren in Iconium and Synnada, and at many other places.” The debate arose in the wake of the Montanist movement (*Ep.* 75.7.3 ff., 19.4). Remarks of Dionysius of Alexandria himself imply that rejection of heretical baptism could be traced in Alexandria no further back than the episcopacy of his predecessor Heraclas, i.e., to the course of the 230s (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.7.4). That a roughly contemporary meeting should also have been convened in the West in Africa to face similar circumstances is our best guess for the occasion of Agrippinus' Council. If this guess is accurate (date in the vicinity of 230 ±), no wonder too heavy a stress on a *tradition* established but 20-odd years or so was to be eschewed; the case needed to be argued afresh. (For third-century debates held both in East and West at roughly the same time on similar issues, compare the question of penitence for adultery—see *Ep.* 55 n. 87—or of penitence for apostasy—see *Letters of Cyprian* 3, intro. pp. 17 ff. The resurgence of the baptismal question is now following suit in Rome and Africa as well as in Alexandria and throughout Asia Minor.)

Among further discussion Benson 335 ff.; Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.154 ff., 180 ff.; Turner in Swete's *Essays* 152 ff.; DACL 7 (1926) s.v. “Iconium” 9 ff. (Leclercq); DHGE 1 (1912) s.v. “Agrippinus” 1039 ff. (Audollent); Monceaux, *Histoire* 1.19 f., 2.4 f., 36 ff.,

91 ff.; Harnack, *Geschichte* 1.2.687 f.; Beyschlag, *Theol. Zeitschrift* 20 (1964) 103 ff.; Sage 14 ff., 308 f.

5. Jer. 2.13, Fahey 219, followed by Prov. 9.18c, Fahey 161 f. (quoted also by Nemesianus in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*. 5 H. 438, whose text here, as elsewhere, varies from Cyprian's, cf. von Soden, *Das lateinische N.T. in Africa* 248 ff.). Pacian echoes the first passage in his *Ep.* 3.3 ML 13.1065: *non consecrata sede contentus, detritum lacum adulterini fontis adamavit*, as does Jerome in his *Dialog. adv. Luciferianos* 23 ML 23.177: *conatus est et beatus Cyprianus contritos lacus fugere nec bibere de aqua aliena*. . . .

6. *oportet vero mundari et sanctificari aquam prius a sacerdote*. An early testimony to the use of specially blessed waters for baptism, betraying a somewhat primitive view of the exorcism of elemental evil from the water (*mundari*) and of the infusion of virtue into it through the sacred minister (*sanctificari*). Tert. *De bapt.* 4.4 CCL 1.1.280: *omnes aquae . . . sacramentum sanctificationis consecuntur invocato deo* earlier implies a blessing ceremony, as does the terse notice in Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 21 ed. Botte 80 ("At the time when the cock crows, let prayers be first said over the water"), and compare one of Cyprian's contemporary bishops in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*. 18 H. 444: *aqua sacerdotis prece in ecclesia sanctificata*. For Eastern parallels see Clement Alex. *Excerpta ex Theodot.* 82.2 SC 23.206 ("Likewise also the water, on becoming exorcised water and the water of baptism, not only removes the inferior element [*to cheiron*] but also acquires sanctification") and Origen, *Comm. in Joan.* 3.5 (frag. 36) GCS Origenes Werke 4.512 ("And it is called the divine font: it is no longer mere water, for it is hallowed by the mystic epiclesis"); and for further evidence DACL 2 (1925)*s.vv.* "Bénédictions de l'eau" 685 ff. (P. de Puniet); Dölger, *Der Exorcismus* 164 ff.; and the monograph by Atchley, *On the Epiclesis*, esp. 34 ff.; Quasten, *Theol. Stud.* 7 (1946) 309 ff.; J. D. C. Fischer, *Stud. patr.* 2.2 (1957) 41 ff. Bingham, *Antiquities*, XI.X (532 ff. in 1875 printing) is still useful on the topic.

7. Ezek. 36.25f., Fahey 232, and Num. 19.22, Fahey 86.

8. On the subject of the baptismal *interrogatio* and this particular quotation from it, see *Ep.* 69 nn. 26 ff. The argument presupposes uniformity in liturgical formula, at least among the African churches (cf. *Ep.* 75.10.5: *baptizaret quoque multos usitata et legitima verba inter-*

rogationis usurpans; De rebapt. 10 H. 3.3.81: *aliter quam oportet in traditione sacramenti fuerint locuti* etc. also implies standardised phrasing; and see further Hanson, *Tradition* 168 ff.). The last sentence betrays awareness of the weak force of the logic; this particular line of argument is not reused in the subsequent debate.

9. *ungi quoque necesse est eum qui baptizatus est ut accepto chrismate id est unctione esse unctus Dei et habere in se gratiam Christi possit.* A passage of notable etymological punning: *unctio* = *chrisma* = *gratia Christi*, who is *unctus Dei*. Tertullian *De bapt.* 7.1 CCL 1.1.282 is closely parallel: *unde christi dicti a chrismate quod est unctio quae (et) domino nomen adcommodavit*, but there are many other examples, e.g. Theoph. *Ad Autol.* 1.12 (“We are called Christians because we are anointed with the oil of God”); Isid. *Etym.* 6.19.50 ed. Lindsay: *Chrisma Graece, Latine unctio nominatur; ex cuius nomine et Christus dicitur, et homo post lavacrum sanctificatur.* On Cyprian’s knowledge of Greek see Bayard, *Le latin XV*, and cf. *Epp.* 69 n. 60, 63 n. 13, 60 n. 11. But for Cyprian and his fellow bishops the punning would not just be idle: the anointing with blessed chrism *meant* that the anointed received the blessings of *Christ* (and not exclusively the infusion of the Holy Spirit, which rather came with the imposition of the hand, *Ep.* 74.7.1: *per manus inpositionem . . . quando accipit Spiritum Sanctum*, though the reception of the two was still regarded as inseparable, *Ep.* 74.5.3).

The passage makes two things clear about the African baptismal liturgy. (i) Anointing was considered an essential and integral part of the ceremony: *ungi . . . necesse est ut . . . habere in se gratiam Christi possit* could hardly be a less uncompromising statement. (ii) This form of anointing took place *after* the baptismal washing (*qui baptizatus est*). Tertullian provides confirmation: *De bapt.* 7.1 CCL 1.1.282: *egressi de lavacro perungimur; De resur. mort.* 8.3 CCL 1.2.931 (giving a clear enumeration of the stages in the ritual): *sed et caro abluitur, ut anima emaculetur; caro unguitur, ut anima consecretur; caro signatur, ut anima muniatur; caro manus inpositione adumbratur, ut anima spiritu inlumineatur; caro corpore et sanguine Christi vescitur, ut et anima de deo saginetur.* Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 21 ed. Botte 86 also places an anointing (but not the major one) immediately after baptism (*et postea cum ascenderit ungueatur a presbytero*).

For some discussion Saxer, *Vie liturgique* 129 ff.; Kelly, *Doctrines*

210 f.; Lampe, *Seal of the Spirit* 176 f.; Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* 80 ff.; Galtier, *Rech. de sc. relig.* 2 (1911) 350 ff. and *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.* 13 (1912) 281 f.; Brightman in Swete's *Essays* 349 f.; DACL 3 (1948) s.v. "Confirmation" 2515 ff. (P. de Puniet); de Puniet, *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.* 13 (1912) 450 ff.; *Diction. de spiritualité* 11 (1982) s.vv. "Onctions. Pères de l'église" 801 ff. (J. Wolinski).

10. *porro autem eucharistia est unde baptizati unguuntur oleum in altari sanctificatum*. The argument here is that for the baptismal ceremonies to be effective there is also need of *consecrated* oil—and heretics are without that power to consecrate. So much is clear. But what is not clear is the precise text, and its implications, by which this argument is made. For significant variants are to be found not only for *est* [et], and for *oleum* [oleo], but also for *sanctificatum* [*sanctificatur*, *sanctificato*], and these fundamentally alter the construing of this awkward sentence (though these readings look themselves like attempts at emending away the difficulties of the received text; at this point the Greek version is of no help, reading *hagiazesthai elaion eis eucharistian* ["the oil is hallowed for the thanksgiving"]). And many construe *oleum* as an internal accusative after the passive *unguntur* in a grammatical construction only (to my knowledge) paralleled in the *Itala* of Jn. 11.2 (*quae unxerat Dominum unguentum*), a solecism which it is difficult to believe Cyprian, as the first signatory of this letter, would have tolerated. (Discussion of the grammar in Bayard, *Le latin* 213, and, more persuasively, Schrijnen and Mohrmann, *Studien* 1.11, 77). Not only do the textual readings and the grammar create uncertainties (additionally, is *eucharistia* in the nominative or ablative?) What the bishops may have actually meant by *eucharistia* only serves to compound those uncertainties.

As Hartel's text presently stands, the implication is that baptismal oil is consecrated on the altar (*est . . . oleum in altari sanctificatum*) and that this consecration is associated with *eucharistia*. The wording of the conclusion a little later (*constet oleum sanctificari et eucharistiam fieri apud illos omnino non posse*) puts that interpretation beyond doubt. The significance of *eucharistia* is, therefore, crucial for our understanding of the passage.

In Cyprian, at least, there is no occasion when *eucharistia* is used other than in the concrete sense of Eucharist, i.e. the consecrated elements of bread and wine of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Thus *eucharis-*

tiam accipere, *Test.* 3.94 *tit.* CCL 3.167 and *De dom. orat.* 18 CCL 3A.101; *eucharistiam gestare*, *De bon. pat.* 14 CCL 3A.126 cf. *Ep.* 58.9.2 and [Novat.] *De spect.* 5.5 CCL 4.173; *gerens secum, ut assolet, eucharistiam*; *eucharistiam dare*, *Epp.* 16.2.3, 17.2.1; *eucharistiam tradere*, *Ep.* 16.3.2; *in corpore adque ore violato eucharistia permanere non potuit*, *De laps.* 25 CCL 3.235. Moreover, the expression used by the bishops here a little later (*eucharistiam fieri*) is also found in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 1. H. 437 in a context which puts it beyond doubt that *eucharistiam facere* is a simple variant for *sacrificium celebrare* etc. (*benedicit a Deo maledictus, . . . Deum invocat blasphemus, sacerdotium administrat profanus, ponit altare sacrilegus. ad haec omnia accedit etiam illud malum ut antistes diaboli audeat eucharistiam facere*).

On this evidence from Cyprian and his bishops we should conclude that *eucharistia* would have signified to contemporary readers the bread and wine consecrated upon the altar. The oil was hallowed (*in altari sanctificatum*) on the same altar in company with the consecrated bread and wine, the Eucharist, in much the same way as there could be benediction upon the altar over other elements—cheese and olives, Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 6 ed. Botte 54; first fruits of the crops, roses, and lilies, Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 31 f. ed. Botte 110 ff.; milk and honey (see H. Usener in *Kleine Schriften* 4.404 ff.). On this reading the bishops would appear to be assimilating the sanctification of the oil with the consecration of the bread and wine upon the altar (beyond the power of heretical ministers, who have only counterfeit altars): see the blessing over the offering of oil (made “in the same style as the offering of bread and wine”) in Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 5 ed. Botte 54; the consecration of bread and oil together in Clem. Alex. *Excerpta ex Theodot.* 82.1 SC 23.206; the blessing of bread, water, and oil in the Ethiopic text of the *Apostolic Tradition*, ed. Salles, SC 59.46 f. (cf. *Acts of Thomas* 120 tr. M. R. James 418: “Bring wine mingled with water, and one loaf and oil”); the blessing over water and oil following immediately upon Communion prayers in *Euchologium Serapionis* 17 ed. Funk 2.178 ff. One would have to confess, however, that for this reading to work, the Latin word order is unnaturally and implausibly contorted.

However, there is some room for hesitancy. For there is one example of *eucharistia* in contemporary African Latin where the concrete sense of Eucharist is, while possible, not proven. The Latin

version of Firmilian's letter, at *Ep.* 75.10.5, reads: *sanctificare se panem et eucharistiam facere simularet et sacrificium Domino . . . offerret*. It is feasible that here *eucharistiam facere* is not just a fulsome variant of the preceding *sanctificare panem* but may translate a conjectured *eucharistein* in the Greek original, i.e. signifying "to say a prayer of thanksgiving or blessing." If this prayer of thanksgiving was accompanied by the action of imposing the hands, then *eucharistia* and *eucharistein* would become the equivalent of "prayer of consecration" and "to consecrate." It is not impossible that these may have been the less specific senses of *eucharistia* and *eucharistiam facere* in our present passage, and the way in which the blessed oil is referred to in the *Traditio apostolica* lends some support: it is called the "oil of thanksgiving [*elaion eucharistias*]" in §21 ed. Botte 82, 86, 88. This would end us up with a construing such as: "And, moreover, it is through a prayer [an act] of consecration that the oil with which the baptized are anointed is sanctified upon the altar," or, more concretely and perhaps better, "And, moreover, there is the consecrated matter whereby the baptized are anointed, viz. the oil that has been sanctified upon the altar." We would have to conjecture that the bishops here preserve a broader and earlier use of *eucharistia* which is fast becoming confined to a narrower and more specialised sense. There may be one instance of this use of *eucharistia* in the singular in Tertullian, *De orat.* 24 CCL 1.272: *a Paulo qui in navi coram omnibus eucharistiam fecit*, but even here Tertullian seems to be deliberately ambiguous in his reference to Acts 27.35.

For further discussion relating to this vexed passage, see Dölger, AC 2 (1930) 184 ff.; DACL 6 (1925) s.v. "huile" 2779 f. (F. Cabrol); Segelberg, *Oriens christianus* 48 (1964) 268 ff.; Stam, *Episcopacy* 74 ff., 87 f.; Struckmann, *Die Gegenwart* 305 f.; Brightman in Swete's *Essays* 343; Maertens, *Histoire* 96 f.; Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* 80 f.; Renaud, *Eucharistie* 265 ff.; Saxer, *Vie liturgique* 190 ff., 130 ff.; Chavasse, *L'onction* 65 ff.; Swann, *Relationship* 429 ff.; 447 ff. (on the word *eucharistia* in Cyprian).

11. *sanctificare autem non potuit olei creaturam*. The stylized phrasing *olei creatura* possibly reflects a Hebraism caught up in the actual wording of the African liturgical rubric for blessing the oil (cf. *creatura vitis* in Cyprian's text of Matt. 26.29 quoted in *Ep.* 63.9.2). For later parallels compare the Latin version of Iren. *Adv. haer.* 4.17.5 SC 100.590 ff.: *primitias Deo offerre ex suis creaturis . . . eum qui ex creatura*

est panis . . . et calicem similiter qui est ex ea creatura; cf. *ibid.* 5.2.2 SC 153.32; *Sacramentarium Leonianum* 24 ML 55.40: *Benedic, Domine, et has tuas creaturas fontis, mellis et lactis*, or *Sacramentarium Gelasianum* 1.73: *exorcizo te, creatura aquae, per Deum vivum* (ed. H. A. Wilson [1894] 115). See Bayard, *Le latin* 93; Hanson, *Tradition* 169. Greek parallels are to be found in the *Euchologium Serapionis* 17 and 29 ed. Funk 2.178, 190 (on blessing of the oil), where *ktisma* = *creatura* (cf. Hamman, *Early Christian Prayers*, 125 f. [no. 195] and 130 [no. 207]).

12. Ps. 140.5, Fahey 155.

13. John 9.31, Fahey 389. When Cyprian uses the word *prex* (in the singular), as he does here (*pro baptizato quam precem facere potest*), he is referring as likely as not to the Eucharistic canon during which the newly baptized would be commemorated by name; a Eucharistic celebration immediately followed the washing and anointing (cf. Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 21 ed. Botte 90 ff.; *Ep.* 63.8.3: *sic baptizatis et Spiritum Sanctum consecutis ad bibendum calicem Domini pervenitur*). See *Ep.* 1 n. 26 on *apud altare Dei . . . nominari in sacerdotum prece*.

14. Lev. 19.2, Fahey 80.

15. Note the view that heretics have not just remained unbaptized; they have actually become *polluted* by their contact with the sacrilegious and the impure (cf. *Ep.* 69.9.2). For heretical baptism Cyprian curiously reserves the use of the verb *tinguo* and the noun *inctio* (here *foris inctus*) unless he happens to be alluding to or quoting from his biblical text (Matt. 28.19) as in *Ep.* 73.5.2: Watson 264; Bayard, *Le latin* 186 f. By contrast, Tertullian used the verb freely of legitimate baptism.

16. *una ecclesia a Christo Domino nostro super Petrum origine unitatis et ratione fundata*. Despite the cases of *origine* and *ratione*, these should refer to *Petrum* (accusative forms for them are attested, but not strongly). For close parallel of the present argument see *De unit.* 4 (PT) CCL 3.251: *super illum aedificat ecclesiam . . . et unitatis originem atque rationem sua auctoritate disposuit*; *Ep.* 73.7.1: *Petro primum Dominus, super quem aedificavit ecclesiam et unde unitatis originem instituit et ostendit . . .*; and see further *Ep.* 59 n. 70 for bibliography. And for discussion of the grammar of this passage (with parallels), Koch, *Rh. Mus.* 78 (1929) 427 ff., and Schrijnen and Mohrmann, *Studien* 1.123 f.

17. Matt. 12.30, Fahey 303, followed by 1 John 2.18 f., Fahey 530 f.

18. *unde nos quoque colligere et considerare debemus*. The interpretation of *colligere* has occasioned some divergence, with views ranging from "assemble" (Donna) to (much more probably) "infer" or "conclude" (e.g. Carey, Fahey). But it would certainly be characteristic of Cyprian's style verbally to pick up immediately-preceding biblical citations; there may be allusion, therefore, to Matt. 12.30, which has just been quoted (*qui non mecum colligit*). The passage has been translated accordingly. This sentence may be the source for Sage's otherwise inexplicable assertion (310): "He . . . ended his reply to the Numidian bishops with an invitation to a larger council to consider the matter further."

19. *per omnia divinae gratiae sacramenta*. It is tempting to see in the use of the plural *sacramenta* here a recognition of the two separate sacraments of baptism and confirmation, but the combination with *omnia* suggests that the bishops have in mind rather the whole complex of baptismal ceremonies (washing and *interrogatio*, anointing, sealing, imposition of hands, etc.) as opposed to merely the laying-on of hands (as advocated by some). Cyprian can in fact use elsewhere *utrumque sacramentum* (Epp. 72.1.2, 73.21.3, cf. *Sent. episc. LXXXVII. 5 H. 439*) when referring to water and the Spirit, baptismal washing and the imposition of hands. Discussion in de Ghellinck et al. 210 ff. (Poukens).

LETTER 71

Contents: Quintus has asked Cyprian for his views on the baptism of heretics; a copy of a recent conciliar letter will inform him of the views of his fellow bishops. If it is claimed that heretics have the power to baptize, then either there are two baptisms (which cannot be) or heretics have baptism (and they themselves do not). And if it is claimed that not to baptize those who come from heresy is the ancient custom, then they forget that this applies only to those who were once baptized in the Church (a custom they still follow); but a

person not previously baptized needs the cleansing water of the holy Church. Besides, reason should prevail, not mere custom (as demonstrated in the dispute between Peter and Paul). Counsel may bring improvement on ideas acquired in the past. That was the conclusion reached by Agrippinus and his fellow bishops, a conclusion which they themselves follow. A letter written on the subject is also enclosed, for the information of Quintus and his fellow bishops.

Date and circumstances: With *Ep.* 72 Cyprian enclosed copies of two letters, a copy of this letter (composed “recently” [*nuper*]) and of a letter written previously (*ante*) by his colleagues to bishops of Numidia (= *Ep.* 70). That places this letter firmly after *Ep.* 70 (? spring 255) and before *Ep.* 72 (? spring 256), but a more refined dating is not possible.

The letter is very much a cover note for the two documents it encloses, viz. a copy of the conciliar letter, *Ep.* 70 (§1.1), and of other *litterae* written on the subject of (re)baptism (§4.2 = ?*Ep.* 69). But Cyprian does seize the opportunity for touching on two aspects of the question not previously raised. The first (§2.1 f.) is the distinction between apostates (once baptized) and heretical neophytes (never baptized in the Church). The second, and related, aspect is the claim that recognition of heretical baptism is the ancient custom of the Church (§§2.1 ff.). Though Cyprian deals generally with this claim for most of his short letter, he does not go into a detailed refutation of what that “ancient practice” entailed; he is not yet shaken in the way he is in *Epp.* 73 and 74, while nevertheless aware of the need for *concordia*, *patientia*, and *pax* (§§3.1 f.). Indeed, it is difficult to determine whether in writing this note to bishops far along the African coast in remote Mauretania Cyprian has already in view claims being advanced by Stephen in Rome directly across the Mediterranean (cf. n. 11 below). If he does not now, it will not be too long before he does, from the response which the next letter in the series, *Ep.* 72 along with its enclosures, provoked from Stephen (*Ep.* 74.1.1).

There survives a Syriac version of this letter (P. Martin *ap. Analect. sacra Spic. Soles.* 4 [1883] 72 ff., 78) as well as fragments of an Armenian version (implying also a Greek original?), Dekkers, *Sacris erudiri* 5 (1953) 197 and n. 3.

1. Quintus is a bishop helpfully identified for us in *Ep.* 72.1.3 as *collegam nostrum in Mauretania constitutum* (cf. *Ep.* 73.1.1.). That is to say, he comes from the area most distant from Carthage in the far west of the North African littoral. (Cyprian appears to use Mauretania generally for the two provinces of Caesariensis and Tingitana: cf. *Ep.* 48.3.2; *Sent. episc. LXXXVII. proem.* H. 435). Clearly, neither Quintus nor his Mauretanian colleagues (§4.2) have made the lengthy journey in order to attend the Council of 32 (*Ep.* 70, §1.1), neither will they attend the next Council of 71 (*Ep.* 73.1.2—bishops present from Africa and Numidia only). However, Mauretania is to be represented in the great line-up of bishops in Sept. 256 (though this Quintus still appears to be absent): *Sent. episc. LXXXVII, proem.* H. 435; Thouvenot, REAug 71 (1969) 362, suggests Quintus will have come from the more westerly of the two Mauretaniae (hence his continued absence from Carthage), but that conjecture is unnecessary. On early Christianity in Mauretania see *Ep.* 48 n. 15; for further remarks on Quintus, Maier, *L'épiscopat* 394; von Soden, *Prosopographie* 254, 261; Y. Duval, MEFR 96 (1984) 517 ff.; Benson 363 f. (endeavouring to equate this Quintus with *Quietus a Buruc* of *Sent. episc.* 27 H. 446 f.; for that "Quietus" there is indeed to be found a ms variant reading of "Quintus" [von Soden, *Nachrichten* . . . Göttingen 1909.3, 261 app. crit.], and the speaker of *Sent.* 27 had certainly read this letter [cf. n. 6 below], but *a Buruc* may well conceal *ab Uruc*, that is *Proconsular* Urusi [Henchir Soudga]: Maier, *L'épiscopat* 233).

2. *retulit ad me . . . Lucianus conpresbyter noster*. As likely as not, Lucianus is a presbyter from Quintus' diocese or a Mauretanian cleric who happened to be travelling across to Carthage (cf. the *conpresbyter* Quintus sent by Antonianus, *Ep.* 55.2.1 with n. 5 ad loc.). He is not otherwise attested, though there is a *Carthaginian* presbyter named Lucianus in *Act. Mont.* 23.4 Musurillo 236. See Bardy, *Recherches* 49 n. 51, on the various Luciani who appear in Cyprian's correspondence.

3. *quid nuper in concilio plurimi coepiscopi . . . censuerimus . . . eiusdem epistulae exemplum tibi misi*. A copy of *Ep.* 70 is enclosed, drawn up by the 32 attending bishops (= *plurimi*). For this identification see intro. to this letter. *Nuper* here is probably restricted to a matter of months, in the interval between the Council of 32 (? spring 255) and the Council of 71 (? spring 256, *Ep.* 73.1.2): on the dating see *Ep.* 70

intro., and on *nuper* in Cyprian *Ep.* 1 nn. 7 and 27. I do not understand how Benson 349 f. and Hinchliff 90 can conclude from the wording here that the decision of that Council of *Ep.* 70 was “not unanimously arrived at” (Benson), “the synod was not unanimous” (Hinchliff). The phrasing is standard (e.g. *Ep.* 68.2.1: *a concilio plurimorum sacerdotum qui praesentes eramus sententiam retulerit*, and cf. *Epp.* 55.6.1, 59.9.1, 59.13.1); the simple variation in *Ep.* 73.1.1 describing this same Council (*quid in concilio cum complures adessemus decreverimus*) puts their interpretation outside any likelihood.

The surprise is to find that a copy of a Council’s findings did not automatically go out to bishops who were not in attendance: Quintus has had to send a message soliciting a copy. Likewise Iubaianus, *Ep.* 73.1.1 f. We are reminded that, frequently, communications must have been difficult and laborious—not to mention erratic and disrupted (see *Ep.* 62 intro.)—especially in the remoter areas of Cyprian’s ecclesiastical “province.”

4. *quid . . . plurimi coepiscopi cum compresbyteris qui aderant censuerimus ut scires*. Thirty-two bishops (only) had attended the Council—the lowest number we have recorded for the period of Cyprian’s episcopate. Cyprian enhances the authority of their finding by mentioning *en passant* the presbyters who also attended. That should (roughly) double the number of participants at the Council. See *Ep.* 59 n. 76 (for the calculation), *Ep.* 1 n. 3 (for clerics regularly present at Council meetings).

5. *qui apud haereticos tincti sunt*. For Cyprian’s reservation of the verb *tinguo* (and the noun *tinctio*, as in §1.3) for *heretical* baptism, see *Ep.* 70 n. 15.

6. Sir. 34.25 (LXX), Fahey 184. The curious exploitation of this text is repeated by Bishop Quietus in *Sent. episc.* 27 H. 446 f., who bases the argument of his *sententia* upon it. Donatists enthusiastically took up the scriptural argument, to Augustine’s annoyance, e.g. *Contr. epist. Parm.* 2.10.20, 2.10.22 CSEL 51.66.70 f.; *Contr. litt. Petil.* 1.9.10 CSEL 52.9 f.; cf. *Retract.* 1.20.5 CSEL 36.99 f. for observations on the Old African text of this passage (many codices omitting the intermediate verse, as does Cyprian here, “and again touches it”). Earlier in the paragraph there has probably been allusion to John 1.14, 1.17 in the expression *gratia et veritas*, Fahey 372.

7. *Et dicunt se in hoc veterem consuetudinem sequi*. For the first time

in the baptismal dispute we find Cyprian directly confronting a challenge to his position based on the claims of an older tradition. He devotes the rest of the letter trying to parry that challenge; it is not to be taken lightly. His reaction is to assert that (i) the old tradition *is* maintained, where appropriate, but circumstances generally have now changed, with time (§§2.1 f.); that (ii) besides, reason and revelation can improve on received ideas, as happened even in the time of the apostles (§§3.1 f.); and that (iii) it was a previous Council of African bishops which established the tradition they now follow (§4.1). Cyprian passes over the practice between the very beginnings of heresy (§2.1) and the Council of Agrippinus (§4.1); though he remains inexplicit, the shape of his argument implicitly admits that Agrippinus' Council brought improvement (sc. via revelation and reason) upon that previous practice. See *Ep.* 70 n. 4 for other evidence of African innovation. But while the challenge is not taken lightly, Cyprian does not yet show himself sufficiently threatened to feel the need to challenge, in turn, the *details* of that old custom itself—and at length (contrast *Epp.* 73 and 74).

8. *ad veritatem et matricem redeant*. On Cyprian's use of *matrix* see *Ep.* 48 n. 14; for the image of the Church as a fostering mother in Cyprian, *Ep.* 10 n. 3.

9. *ovem abigeatam et errabundam*. *Abigeatus* as a past participle occurs nowhere else, but the attested allied nouns *abigeator*, *abigeus*, (cattle rustler), *abigeatus* (cattle stealing) make the meaning clear (Lucifer of Calaris appears to use the verb in *De non parcendo* 3 CSEL 14.213: *redi ad dei ecclesiam, a qua te per Arrianos abigavit coluber ille*). See Watson 307; Bayard, *Le latin* 37; Ball, *Nature* 255; TLL s.v. "abigeo" [Bickel], and compare *Ep.* 45 n. 29 for another example of Cyprian's novelty of expression concerning lost sheep: he is trying to inject fresh life into a tired cliché.

10. *Petrus quem primum Dominus elegit et super quem aedificavit ecclesiam suam*. On Cyprian's frequent use of Matt. 16.18 ff., see Fahey 309 ff., 609 ff. (and for Peter's being first, there is perhaps also an allusion to Matt. 10.2). Cyprian has no doubts that to Peter was first given *episcopal* authority; his see was therefore the *ecclesia principalis* (on which see *Ep.* 59 n. 70). That makes Peter the paradigmatic example of *episcopal* behaviour—and reasonableness—especially apposite in a letter addressing a bishop.

11. *nec Petrus . . . vindicavit sibi aliquid insolenter aut adroganter adsumpsit, ut diceret se primatum tenere*. On the connotations of *primatus* in Cyprian see *Ep.* 69 n. 31; here the word is intended etymologically to echo the introductory description of Peter as *quem primum Dominus elegit*. Phrases such as “the authority of the firstcomer” and “the rights of seniority” encompass the word’s general area of reference. This passage is alluding, of course, to Acts 15.6 ff. (cf. Gal. 2.1 ff.). These texts have an especial appositeness in disputes with the Roman see, and certainly in later patristic times were so exploited (see e.g. Augustine and the Donatists, *Contra Cresc.* 1.32.38, 2.32.40 CSEL 52.357, 400; *De unico bapt.* 13.22 CSEL 53.21 f.; *Contra Gaudent.* 2.8.9 CSEL 53.265; *De bapt.* 2.1.2, 2.4.5 CSEL 51. 174 ff., 179 f., discussing this Cyprianic passage at length). By the time of *Ep.* 75 (late autumn 256) it is clear that Stephen *was* claiming the authority of Peter’s primordial chair in defence of his *traditio* (*Ep.* 75.17.1 f.), but however tempting a construing it cannot be certainly established that here Cyprian (qua Paul) intends an indirect attack upon the claims of Stephen (in the role of Peter). At least, it goes too far confidently to posit a (lost) communication between Stephen and Quintus with his fellow Mauretanian bishops to which this is a carefully contrived, but oblique, response (cf. contra e.g. d’Alès, *Rev. des quest. hist.* 81 (1907) 366; Colson, *Épiscopat* 107 f.). But within a matter of months Stephen is going to be sent a copy of this letter (*Ep.* 72.1.3); as with *Ep.* 70, also included with *Ep.* 72 (see *Ep.* 70 n. 3), Stephen can be expected to register a smarting rebuke on reading this passage. Cyprian may indeed be deliberately undercutting the primacy text of his *De unit.* 4, where he had declared baldly *primatus Petro datur* CCL 3.251 (contrast *nec Petrus . . . adroganter adsumpsit, ut diceret se primatum tenere*), and he may already be drafting a replacement version less open to ambiguous interpretation (cf. Bévenot, *JTS* 5 [1954] 34).

This present argument is echoed in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 56 H. 454 (Zosimus a Tharassa): *Revelatione facta veritatis cedat error veritati, quia et Petrus qui prius circumcidebat cessit Paulo veritatem praedicanti*. And for further discussion of the Peter-Paul dispute in patristic literature, Haendler, *Theol. Literaturzeit.* 97 (1972) 561 ff.; Pietri, *Roma christiana* 285 f.

12. 1 Cor. 14.29 f. Paul is introduced as *et concordiae et paci fideliter consulens*. Cyprian used similar phrasing, but more enigmati-

cally turned, in *Ep.* 44.3.2: *si pacifice sibi ac fideliter consuluisse . . . confitenter* (where see n. 17). Augustine discusses the present argument in *De bapt.* 2.8.13 CSEL 51. 187 f.

13. A disconcertingly abrupt conclusion to the argument. It is as if Cyprian wishes to avoid stepping onto the treacherous terrain to which the logic of his argument is leading—demonstrating the status of improved “revelation” for his viewpoint. As so often in Cyprian, baptism is identified with the forgiveness of sins (cf. *Ep.* 69.11.1 ff.).

14. On the Council of Agrippinus see *Ep.* 70 n. 4 (observe that Mauretania was not represented). Cyprian has reserved the authority of the Council of Agrippinus *bonae memoriae* until last; he can persuasively suggest that the African policy not only itself has the status of a *consuetudo* but of a reasoned *consuetudo* at that (*librata consilii communis examinatione*). Agrippinus is described as *bonae memoriae*; that was to become standard phrasing in Christian epitaphs. See ILCV Index xii s.vv. “*bonae memoriae*.”

15. *quales super hac re litteras fecerimus, ut scires, exemplum earum . . . pro communi dilectione transmisimus*. We cannot tell whether *litteras* refers to one or more documents. As a copy of *Ep.* 70 has already been enclosed (§1.1), we might deduce that a copy of *Ep.* 69 at least is now attached as well. Ritschl, *De epist.* 32 f., implausibly believes that Cyprian is here referring to the *same* document (*Ep.* 70) of which he has already said he was sending a copy in §1.1.; the addition of the phrase *ut scires* makes that interpretation most unlikely and prevents the emphasis being solely on the *dissemination* by Quintus of the material among his fellow Mauretanian bishops.

LETTER 72

Contents: At a well-attended Council there were two items of business, among many, which the African bishops wish to draw to the attention of Stephen. Firstly, they resolved that it is not enough if those who were baptized among heretics should simply have hands laid upon them; heretics have no baptism (copies of two letters on the subject explain their case). Secondly, heretical clergy may not retain their clerical rank on joining or rejoining the Church: the clergy must

be men without blemish. And these men have sinned against charity and they have on their hands the souls of those who died unreconciled, outside the Church. Not all of their colleagues agree with their resolutions; they are free to exercise their own judgment, but will need to give an account, one day, of their stewardship.

Date and circumstances: The letter comes after *Epp.* 70 and 71, copies of which are enclosed (§1.3). The enclosures are to explain the bishops' position on rebaptism. *Ep.* 73 (to Iubaianus) was clearly regarded by Cyprian as his fullest and most considered exposition of the issue and, as such, it was read out before the assembled bishops of the Council of September 256 (*Sent. episc. LXXXVII proem.* H. 435). But *Ep.* 73 is not enclosed with this letter: we ought to conclude that it has not yet been penned; and that *Ep.* 73, while mentioning the Council of *Ep.* 70 and the letter to Quintus (*Ep.* 71), also mentions a very recent (*nunc*) Council which has passed resolution once more (*denuo*) on the baptismal question, attended by 71 bishops (§§1.1 f.). The convergence is obvious. This letter ought to be a product of that Council of 71 bishops. There remains little other option than to place this Council in spring of 256 (about a month after Easter, in very late April). The four months that follow, until September 1, are going to witness a frenetic flurry of activity, polemic, and recrimination over the baptismal controversy, but all the evidence we have can be accommodated within this timetable (see intro. to this volume, pp. 4 ff.).

For discussion, Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.46 f.; Harnack, *Geschichte* 2.2.358 f.; Ritschl, *De epist.* 36 ff.; Nelke, *Chronologie* 94 ff.; von Soden, *Briefsammlung* 29 f.; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 26 f.; Sage 318 f.; Hinchliff 91 f.; Fischer, *Ann. hist. conc.* 15 (1983) 1 ff.; Benson 351 f., 362 f. (adequately refuting the hypothesis that this letter is a product of the Council of Sept. 1, 256. Compare Ernst, *Theol. Quartalsch.* 93 [1911] 230 ff., 364 ff. against von Soden, *Quellen und Forschung.* 12 [1909] 7 ff.).

The tone is to be noted. It is carefully modulated, unaggressive, studiously temperate in its conclusion. This is not the way Cyprian (or his colleagues, for that matter) can react when roused or threatened (contrast *Ep.* 74; *De rebap.*). It is by imagination only that this letter can be made to come weighted down with significant irony or shot through with the chilly politeness that is spoken between

clenched teeth. This may be so, but we cannot prove it from the text alone. Much less can it be characterized as "even fierce in tone" (Hinchliff 91) or as possessing a "scolding, almost condescending tone" (Younge, *Cyprian of Carthage* 98 n. 32).

The parallel with *Ep.* 57 is instructive. That is a conciliar letter from an African Council addressed to a predecessor of Stephen's, Cornelius. Of their own initiative the African bishops have profoundly modified previous penitential discipline, now reconciling penitent apostates. They write to Cornelius explaining the reasons for their resolution, conveying to Rome information on such an important matter, urging Cornelius to resolve similarly but insisting at the same time that they are not laying down the law for any colleague who may disagree (see esp. *Ep.* 57.5.1 f.). *Ep.* 72, in parallel fashion, is conveying to Rome resolutions reached independently by another African Council; they, too, are on matters of major importance (§1.1). Stephen, similarly, is urged to give them his favour, but at the same time colleagues who disagree are not going to be forced to comply (§3.1 f.). *Ep.* 57 is not a document of ponderous irony, nor of studiously polite hostility. Neither, need we conclude, is this letter. *Ep.* 57 met with a favourable reception in Rome (*Ep.* 68.5.1), as had the resolutions of the African Council of 251, also conveyed to Rome (*Ep.* 55.6.2). *Ep.* 72 might eventually be expected to fare likewise.

If this was indeed the expectation, it was profoundly mistaken.

Stephen's divergent views on the baptismal problem—and the Roman tradition itself—can hardly have been unknown. But a number of African colleagues had been so minded also. It had, it is true, required *two* Council meetings on the matter in order to reach the present, generous consensus (71 bishops would represent a clear majority among the African episcopate), but at least it had been reached. And in a few months' time, despite earlier indecision and debate, no fewer than 87 bishops could express their united opinion without a sign of doubt or hesitation. Rome would be won around also, in due time, on the sanguine principle (which Cyprian had written to Stephen in *Ep.* 68.5.2) that "it is not possible that there should be divergence of opinion among men in whom there is but one and the same Spirit."

But the Spirit required tact. Unfortunately, *Epp.* 70 and 71 (now enclosed, for information) had been intended for other audiences (a

group of Numidian bishops, a Mauretanian bishop). But when now reread through Stephen's eyes, they could hardly fail to exasperate. Stephen would see the majority African view (which he happened to oppose) blatantly described as "the undeviating truth of the Catholic rule" (*veritatem et firmitatem catholicae regulae*, *Ep.* 70.1.2) and as "a judgment that is so just and holy, so salutary to faith and conformable to the Catholic Church" (*sententiam religiosam et legitimam, salutarem fidei et ecclesiae catholicae congruentem*, *Ep.* 71.4.1). He would read that those who give their approval to the baptism of heretics (as he did) are described as preferring to give honour to heretics than to agree with their opponents (*Ep.* 71.1.3), and that to maintain a received tradition in the face of revelation for the better was stubborn and pig-headed (he would encounter words like *insolenter*, *adroganter*, *pertinaciter* in *Ep.* 71.3.1). And all this was illustrated by an irritating analogy of Peter and Paul over circumcision, with Cyprian in thin disguise, it would appear, cast in the role of the reforming and persuasive Paul, "faithfully devoted to harmony and peace" (*Ep.* 71.3.2). And any exasperation on reading these sentiments will not have been mollified if the somewhat tart and chiding tone of passages in *Epp.* 67 and 68 (esp. 67.5.3 f., 7, 9.1 f.; 68.2.1, 3.1, 5.1 f.) has been savoured by Stephen already. Yet another intrusion by Cyprian rasped upon already sensitive nerves.

The second half of this letter concerns itself with conditions proper for the reconciliation of heretical clergy. Laicisation had been the universally agreed condition for reconciled *apostates* (see *Ep.* 67.6.3, with examples in *Epp.* 55.11.3, 64.1.1, 65.1.1). This is now extended, by easy analogy, to reconciled *heretics*. There is nothing novel here. Cornelius e.g. had so treated one of the bishops who had assisted at Novatian's consecration (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.10). But the item could well have come up for affirmation in a context where the status of, and rapprochement with, Novatianist schismatics was being debated (cf. Novatus of Timgad in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII.* 4 H. 438). And there was point in reminding Stephen of that affirmation. He had shown himself slow to oppose a Gallic bishop of Novatianist persuasion (*Ep.* 68); he may have already voiced approval for the reinstallation of an apostate bishop in Spain (*Ep.* 67.5.3). And a close predecessor of his in Rome, Cornelius, had in fact reconciled a Novatianising confessor *without* laicisation (*Ep.* 49.2.5). Moreover, ru-

mour had it that an earlier predecessor had actually “decreed that if a bishop was guilty of any sin, even if a sin unto death, he ought not to be deposed” (Hippolytus on Callistus, *Refut.* 9.12.21 GCS Hippolytus 3.249). It was well to labour the matter in no uncertain terms. See further *Ep.* 49 n. 18, with bibliography.

Notoriously, Augustine could not locate this letter in his copy of Cyprian’s correspondence (*De bapt.* 6.15.25 CSEL 51.314). And this letter may have been read out at the Council of Sept. 256, presumably to remind the bishops of their earlier resolutions, *Sent. Episc. LXXXVII.* 8 H. 441: *tanto coetu sanctissimorum consacerdotum lectis literis Cypriani dilectissimi nostri ad Iubaianum itemque ad Stephanum*. Cyprian is presently to send Iubaianus a copy of his tractate *De bono patientiae* (*Ep.* 73.26.2). One wonders whether a version of it may have provided a suitable sermon for opening the Council which produced this letter.

1. *Cyprianus et ceteri Stephano fratri s.* Unlike *Ep.* 64, where the names of the *ceteri* are also not specified but their number is (66), we are given no indication here of the number who attended the Council from which this letter emanates. *Ep.* 73.1.1 f., however, lists in turn a conciliar document, followed by a letter, written subsequently, to Quintus (i.e. *Epp.* 70 and 71) and then a very recent Council attended by 71 bishops. Unless one is inclined uneconomically to multiply Council gatherings, we should identify this letter, *Ep.* 72, with that Council of 71 bishops. The *ceteri* will, therefore, number 70, and they hailed from the provinces of Africa (Proconsularis) and Numidia (*Ep.* 73.1.2). See further intro. to this letter.

2. *neesse habuimus . . . cogere et celebrare concilium*. Some conclude from this wording (e.g. Ritschl, *De epist.* 38 f.) that the Council must have been a special (versus regular) meeting. That does not have to follow. But we could conclude that a meeting need not be held at the regular time unless there was a sufficient volume of important business. Some trouble has been taken in this opening sentence to stress the careful thoughtfulness and the gravity of the proceedings whereby the resolutions about to be conveyed to Stephen were reached. Those conclusions are to be pondered in that same spirit of high seriousness.

3. *multa quidem prolata adque exacta sunt*. We do not know of

other items of business save the two discussed in this letter (the status of heretical baptism; the status of heretical clergy after reconciliation).

4. *sed de eo vel maxime tibi scribendum et cum tua gravitate ac sapientia conferendum fuit.* This is the language of studious courtesy; compare similar deferential phrasing at the conclusion (§3.1): *pro religionis tuae et fidei veritate.* I do not know how Younge, *Cyprian of Carthage* 27, can claim that Cyprian "was able to speak . . . to Cornelius' successor Stephen as to a social inferior." It was indeed the custom of the two churches of Carthage and Rome to keep each other informed of *res sollicitae*, cf. *Ep.* 36.4.1 (with n. 18 ad loc.), *Ep.* 59.9.1 (with n. 38), and intro. to *Letters of Cyprian*, 2 ACW 44, pp. 16 ff. The synodal letter *Ep.* 57 (to Cornelius) is a close parallel. The precise nuance of *conferendum* (discuss, confer, consult, refer, convey, etc.) is helpfully glossed in §3.1: *haec ad conscientiam tuam . . . pertulimus.* Information is being conveyed rather than counsel solicited.

5. *quod magis pertineat et ad sacerdotalem auctoritatem et ad ecclesiae catholicae unitatem pariter ac dignitatem.* Cyprian could well have written like this to any other bishop, but the chair of Peter held for him a special place as the source of episcopal authority and the origin of ecclesiastical unity (cf. *De unit.* 4, both versions). The successor to Peter could not fail to be concerned with the matter, for to acknowledge heretical baptism was to break church unity (heretics would now be part of the Church) and to diminish episcopal power (heretics would now have the same power as orthodox bishops to baptize).

6. *qui sunt foris extra ecclesiam tincti.* On Cyprian's use of *tinguo* (for heretical baptism) see *Ep.* 70 n. 15. He here proceeds to pun on the word, drawing out the developed sense of "stain," "dye."

7. *parum sit eis manum inponere ad accipiendum spiritum sanctum.* Cyprian appears recklessly to confuse laying-on of hands in penitence (as in the case of penitent apostates, e.g. *Ep.* 71.2.2) and laying-on of hands for receiving the Holy Spirit (as in the case of those baptized outside the Church, e.g. *Ep.* 69.11.3). Though the two ceremonies might have appeared little different, the distinction was vital for understanding his opponents' case; see Bévenot, *Heythrop Journ.* 19 (1978) 125 ff.

8. *tunc enim demum plene sanctificari et esse filii Dei possunt si sacramento utroque nascentur.* The addition of *plene* suggests that the bishops

have been confronting an argument which conceded *some* (but not full) efficacy to heretical baptism (cf. *Ep.* 69 10.2 ff.). On the expression *sacramento utroque* cf. *Ep.* 70 n. 19; in the clause *filius Dei esse possunt* there is presumably allusion to Rom. 8.14 or Gal. 4.5 f. (omitted by Fahey). On the text from John 3.5 see Fahey 374 ff. (used again, with a similar—and rather surprising—interpretation, in *Ep.* 73.21.3 and by Nemesianus in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII.* 5 H. 439).

9. Allusion to Acts 10.44 ff. (Fahey 416 f.). The illustration is pointed: no more suitable model could be provided for the occupant of the chair of Peter than Peter himself (and see *Ep.* 75.17.1 f. for Stephen's pride in his position as the successor of Peter).

10. Copies of *Epp.* 71 and 70 are enclosed. Most mss read *subdidi* ("I have appended"); the slip into the first person singular discloses that this joint letter is largely a composition of Cyprian's own. (But on the reading see Bayard, *Le latin* 363—the expected *-imus* ending has been lost by homoeoteleuton with the immediately following *ad-dimus* and *adiungimus*?)

11. Note the assumption that presbyters will have the faculties for offering the sacrifice, on which see *Ep.* 5 n. 13. They would be assisted in this liturgy by deacons; see *Epp.* 3 n. 17 and 5 n. 13.

12. *nec debere . . . eadem apud nos ordinationis et honoris arma retinere quibus contra nos rebellaverint*. The stress seems to fall not so much on the clergy ordained by heretics as on the clergy who turned rebels.

13. The same catena of three texts, viz. Levit. 21.17, Exod. 19.22 and 30.20 f. (Fahey 82 and 75), has already been used in *Ep.* 65.2.1 and *Ep.* 67.1.2.

14. *credentes etiam tibi pro religionis tuae et fidei veritate placere quae et religiosa pariter et vera sunt*. There can be nothing inherent in the language here to suggest that it is heavily larded with irony. The movement of the concluding section of *Ep.* 57 (to Cornelius) is closely parallel: after reporting the resolution of their Council, the African bishops voice the trusting sentiment *Quod credimus vobis quoque paternae misericordiae contemplatione placitum* ("And we believe that you, too, being sensible of God's paternal compassion, will agree with our decision"). We have but a variation of that sentiment.

In the preceding paragraph there is presumably in the expression *in domo fidei* a passing allusion to Gal. 6.10 [*domesticos fidei*].)

15. *scimus quosdam quod semel inbiberint nolle deponere*. This echoes

language Cyprian had used in addressing the *Mauretanian* bishop Quintus: *debere unumquemque non pro eo quod semel inbiberat. . . . pertinaciter congrédi* (*Ep.* 71.3.2), and in that letter, on any ordinary reading, Cyprian has in view fellow *African* bishops (*quidam de collegis nostris*, *Ep.* 71.1.3) who refuse to change their ideas (see intro. to *Ep.* 71). There is every probability that the same (African) dissidents are again being referred to here. The Council of 71 bishops (cf n. 1 above) has now made clear what is the majority African opinion. Compare *Ep.* 57.5.2, where the possibility is entertained that some colleague might disregard their synodal resolution (*quod si de collegis aliquis extiterit . . .*); and there the colleague *must* be African (see *Ep.* 57 nn. 32 and 33).

16. For this characteristic Cyprianic outlet for episcopal disagreement within an overall structure of ecclesiastical unity, see *Ep.* 55 n. 95; it is a sentiment voiced again at the conclusion of the conciliar letter *Ep.* 57 (§5.2) and consistently repeated by Cyprian throughout the baptismal dispute (see *Ep.* 69 n. 61). There are no special grounds for deducing that the bishops are already confronting some hostile threat of excommunication which they are diplomatically, and obliquely, attempting to deflect.

LETTER 73

Contents: Iubaianus has asked Cyprian for his views on rebaptism (§1). It is of no consequence that heretics like Novatianists demand rebaptism (§2). But it is indeed no novelty to require rebaptism nor has it proved to be in practice any obstacle to conversion (§3). To make the validity of baptism depend on the faith of the receiver would be to allow any heretic who professes the Trinity to have the power to baptize (§4). But even in the case of Marcionites, they reject the Father-Creator; they, therefore, do not baptize in the same faith as we do (§5). But if they could baptize, they could remit sins; and if they could remit sins, they could bestow the Holy Spirit (§6). The Gospel, however, shows that sins can be remitted only in the Church (§7). The case of the Samaritans is no exception; they were baptized by Philip the deacon within the Church (§9). There is, in fact, no

evidence for the alleged apostolic approval of the baptism of heretics (§13), neither did Paul make concessions to heretics (§14). Rather, the apostles reviled heretics as antichrists (§15).

The invocation of the Name of Jesus Christ can have no effect in the baptism of heretics. Heretics, like Marcionites, must acknowledge God the Father, the Creator, as well as Christ, for baptism is in the Name of the Trinity (§§16–18). Christ will not protect those who blaspheme His own Father, much less can heretics expect to receive forgiveness of sins from Him (§§19–20). They cannot even receive baptism of blood by public confession of His Name, §21 (the case of catechumens is different, §22). Mistakes made in the past do not condone persistence in error (§23) and heretics are the more eager to join the Church when they realize there can be no baptism outside it (§24). Baptism goes with the Church: to surrender baptism is to abandon one's birthright, as Esau did (§25). No prescription, however, is being laid down for any bishop whose views may be otherwise (§26).

Date and circumstances: *Ep.* 73 comes after two Councils have already been held on the baptismal issue (and after Cyprian has also written his letter to Quintus, *Ep.* 71), §§1.1 f. From Cyprian's wording in §1.2 (*et nunc quoque*) this letter should in fact be written not very long after the second of those two Councils; in all probability, therefore, round about May/June of 256 (see *Ep.* 72 intro.). *Ep.* 73 was available to be read out later in the year, on September 1, at the next Council meeting; by that time Iubaianus had written his response to *Ep.* 73 and it had reached Carthage (see n. 1 below). As Cyprian had sent to Pope Stephen a copy of his letter in reply to Quintus (*Ep.* 72.1.3), so we could expect him now to send a copy of this reply to Iubaianus; in September Cyprian clearly showed he regarded this letter as the most considered exposition he had so far made on the baptismal issue by reading it out in full before the Council (*Sent. episc. LXXXVII proem.* H. 435, *Sent.* 87 H. 461 [Cyprian]: *meam sententiam plenissime exprimit epistula quae ad Iubaianum collegam nostrum scripta est*). It would make sense—but it must remain conjectural—if the ugly scenes enacted in Rome when Stephen publicly refused to receive Cyprian's episcopal envoys and insultingly denied them Christian hospitality (the hallmark of unity) and communion (*Ep.* 75.25.1, cf. 75.6.2, 24.1 ff.) were in reaction to the arrival of messengers bearing from Cy-

prian a copy of this forthrightly written *Ep.* 73; Stephen's hackles had already been raised by the contents of *Ep.* 72 and its enclosures (though Cyprian may very well have caused offence unwittingly: see *Ep.* 72 intro.). The special Council of September would then be convened in spirited response to such a highhanded act, a scandalous ecclesiastical rebuff; the episcopal muster in Carthage was a confident demonstration of strength and solidarity in opposition. Be that as it may, the scenes in Rome must occur early enough for Cyprian's messenger to be able to describe them to Firmilian over in Cappadocian Caesarea, when he delivered to him his dossier of letters. Firmilian is writing his reply to Cyprian's dossier in the late autumn of this same year (but before the sailing season has closed), *Ep.* 75.5.1. I very much incline to doubt whether the journeying time from Carthage to Caesarea, high inland in central Cappadocia, would admit the timetable that Stephen was angrily reacting to news of the *September* meeting in Carthage. But on all this see further *Ep.* 75 intro.; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 26 f.; Benson 351 f.; Ritschl, *De epistulis* 33 ff.; Nelke, *Chronologie* 121 f., 131 (unconvincing); Ernst, *Papst Stephan I* 69 ff.

The letter gives us some insight into the energetic pamphleteering and the flurry of communications which the debate has occasioned (not only Iubaianus' own letter, §1.1, but one he also enclosed, §4.1, along with a wide range of unassigned objections—see n. 12 below). There have now been two Council meetings in Carthage on the issue (§§1.1 f.): Cyprian can speak with confident firmness of the inspired truth of their viewpoint and with full assurance deny apostolic origins for the erroneous custom they oppose (§§13.1 ff.). He can be harshly outspoken against those opponents, but his tone is neither hysterical nor threatened. He is arguing with urgency on a matter of high seriousness (even if we find the rhetorical mode of argumentation often unpersuasive, e.g. §24). We do not have to believe that in writing to Iubaianus Cyprian has also one eye cast on Stephen. But if Cyprian did send Stephen a copy—or if Cyprian's opponents saw that one reached his hands—then we could hardly expect Stephen to thrill with pleasure on encountering holders of his view described as “perverters of the truth,” “betrayers of church unity” (§11.2), “partners in the blasphemies of heretics” (§18.3); his stance is characterized as “absurd,” “perverse” (§20.1), “stubborn,” “pigheaded” (§23.2), due to “prejudice” and “obstinacy” (§13.2); he

would learn that he "sins without the pardon granted to ignorance" (§13.2), that it was inconceivable that "a follower of Christ and a servant of God" should entertain and state the views which he in fact held (§19.1). Some of the breakdown in relations between Carthage and Rome could be attributed to Cyprian's fatal facility in polemic.

1. The diocese of Iubaianus is unknown. He was not in attendance at any of the recorded Councils held in Carthage during the 250s; hence it is normally presumed that he was domiciled in some remote area such as Mauretania (cf. Bishop Quintus of *Ep.* 71, where see n. 1), but it needs to be remembered that this is presumption only. We have neither the letter Iubaianus originally wrote to Cyprian (§1.1), nor the document Iubaianus enclosed with it (see n. 12 below), nor Iubaianus' reply to this letter, in which he declared himself grateful, instructed, and convinced (*non tantum consensit sed etiam instructum se esse confessus gratias egit*, *Sent. episc. LXXXVII proem.* H. 435). See further Maier, *L'épiscopat* 343; von Soden, *Prosopographie* 261; Harnack, *Über verlorene Briefe* 41 f.; Y. Duval, *MEFR* 96 (1984) 518 f.; L. Campeau, *Science et esprit* 22 (1970) 26 ff., (dubiously) hypothesizes a Spanish location for Iubaianus.

2. Cyprian encloses copies of the conciliar letter *Ep.* 70 and of his personal letter to Quintus, *Ep.* 71. In this opening section there is notable variation in Cyprian's use of the first person singular and plural: in these instances the plural seems to carry the connotation of Cyprian along with his brother bishops. On such variations cf. *Epp.* 4 n. 45, 16 n. 34, 20 n. 3, 66 n. 33, 81 n. 4, 82 n. 8.

3. *et nunc quoque . . . tam provinciae Africae quam Numidiae episcopi . . . hoc idem denuo sententia nostra firmavimus.* The language implies the Council has been held only very recently, but a copy of *Ep.* 72 (emanating from that Council) is apparently not enclosed. Iubaianus, it is expected, will be in ignorance of its findings (cf. *Ep.* 71 n. 3). It is legitimate to suspect that Cyprian will not have had time to receive yet any response from Stephen to *Ep.* 72 and its enclosures. The bishops this time gathered from Numidia as well as from Africa Proconsularis; on the previous occasion (*Ep.* 70) they appear to have been from Africa Proconsularis only (see *Ep.* 70 n. 1).

4. *Novatienses rebaptizare eos quos a nobis sollicitant.* The argument presented to Cyprian was that the orthodox should not be doing what

the heterodox Novatianists insist on doing. Dionysius of Alexandria (in a letter to Dionysius of Rome, before his elevation to the bishopric of Rome) complains (obscurely) that Novatian “annuls the holy washing and overthrows the faith and confession that precede it” (*ap. Euseb. H.E.* 7.8); he appears to be alluding to the same Novatianist insistence on “rebaptism.” While the Novatianist schism appears to have been the catalyst for the rebaptism explosion, Novatianists were last mentioned in *Ep.* 69 (in response to Magnus). For Cyprian, what particular branch of heterodoxy was not a crucial issue; being outside was. For abundant evidence of later Novatianists’ insistence on “rebaptism,” see Vogt, *Coetus sanctorum* 168 ff. Note that this paragraph provides evidence that Novatian was still alive: Vogt 26 f.

5. *dummodo teneamus ipsi potestatis nostrae honorem et rationis et veritatis firmitatem*. Observe that there is no word of apostolic custom, of evangelic *traditio*. The significance of the phrase *potestatis nostrae honorem* is explicated in the concluding §25.2 (on abrogating one’s birthright).

6. *nos autem qui ecclesiae unius caput et radicem tenemus*. On the language here compare *Ep.* 45.1.2 (*radix et mater*) with n. 5 ad loc., and *Ep.* 48.3.1 (*matrix et radix*) with n. 14 ad loc.

7. *ipse baptizatus prius fuerat quando divinae unitatis et rationem et veritatem tenebat*. Cyprian entertains no doubts about the adequacy of Novatian’s own baptism—unlike Cornelius *ap. Euseb. H.E.* 6.43.14 f. That is consistent with Cyprian’s views on “clinical” baptism, *Ep.* 69.12.1 ff.

8. *anni sint iam multi et longa aetas ex quo . . . episcopi plurimi hoc statuerint*. The charge of novelty of practice is reverted to in §§13.1 f. and again in §23.1 f. in the form of objections raised, and then refuted (*quidam . . . nobis opponunt; sed dicit aliquis*). These objections may well have been voiced by Iubaianus himself or in the document Iubaianus enclosed (§4.1). The heavy stress laid on the lengthy lapse of years (whereas, in fact, the period may well have extended over only about 25 years or so) discloses the sensitivity of Cyprian to this telling charge. See *Ep.* 70 n. 4 for discussion on Agrippinus and his Council of (?) 70 bishops and its probable dating.

9. *exinde in hodiernum tot milia haereticorum in provinciis nostris ad ecclesiam conversi non aspernati sint neque cunctati*. From our information the two most formidable heretical movements in N. Africa had been

those of Marcion and Montanus; they are most likely to have been the major source for this copious supply of converts. Note the plural *provinciae nostrae*: Cyprian appears to be talking about the imperial divisions of government in N. Africa which comprised his, and Agrippinus', ecclesiastical "province." On Cyprian's use of *provincia* see *Epp.* 27 n. 14, 48 n. 15, 55 n. 93, 59 n. 81. The objection, here adumbrated, that "rebaptism" in fact raises a barrier to reunion is countered in §§24.1 ff.

10. On catechists (here, *doctor*) see *Ep.* 29 nn. 11 and 12.

11. *nos non demus stuporem haereticis patrocini et consensus nostri, et libenter ac prompte obtemperant veritati*. So Hartel's text, but I am unconvinced that it is sound. I translate making the best sense I can out of the passage: the general line of argument seems to be that to require "rebaptism" has proved in fact to be no hindrance to conversion to orthodoxy; there is no call, therefore, to disguise the truth by going along with the false claims of heretics that they have the power to baptize.

12. Some (e.g. Benson 398) have attempted to identify this (anonymous) enclosure with the (anonymous) treatise *De rebaptismate*; but its contents as disclosed in *Ep.* 73 do not square with those of the *De rebapt.* They both form part of the vigorous pamphleteering of the time, cf. *De rebapt.* 1 H.3.70: *nonnulla super hac nova quaestione scripta aut rescripta*. There is lengthy discussion on the relationship between Cyp. *epp.* and the *De rebaptismate* by Koch, *Intern. kirchl. Zeitschr.* 14 (1924) 134 ff. On this enclosure Harnack, *Über verlorene Briefe* 16 f. (the *quidam*, *aliquis*, or *quisquam* of §§9.1, 13.1, 14.1, 22.1, 23.1, 24.1, 25.1 might, but need not, allude to further contents). It is an unwarranted assumption that the anonymous enclosure was in fact written by Stephen (made, among others, by Ritschl, *De epistulis* 37; d'Alès, *Rev. des quest. hist.* 81 [1907] 373; Bord, *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.* 18 [1922] 448); discussion in Ernst, *Papst Stephan I* 37 ff. Certainly the argument produced by Iubaianus in §2.1 ("we ought not to ape Novatianist practice") is incompatible with Stephen's stance (*Ep.* 74.1.2).

13. *quod iam in nomine lesu Christi baptizati esse videantur*. At this point Cyprian's concern is not so much with any alleged inadequacies in the baptismal formula used by Marcionites (§§4.2 and 5.2 show this) but with the claim that the power of the Name of Jesus Christ which they invoke in the course of baptism is efficacious, despite

their own inadequacies as its ministers (cf. *De rebapt.* 10 ff. H. 3.82 ff.). Compare n. 18 below, §14.3 and n. 38, §§16.1 ff.

14. Cyprian lists a collection of heresies, Gnostic in tendency but selected for clear divergences in their doctrine of the Trinity. What they meant, therefore, by one or other of the three Persons was notoriously unorthodox; hence the faith in which the followers of these sects were baptized, in the name of those three Persons, was indisputably distinct. Marcionites, to become the focus of attention, are reserved for last. There is an abbreviated repetition of the catalogue in *Ep.* 74.7.3 echoed by Firmilian in *Ep.* 75.5.2 (adding a local prophetess to the list in *Ep.* 75.10.2 ff.). Some have remarked with surprise on the absence, in an African context, of Montanists from the list (and even deduced from this passage that they must have either been insignificant in numbers by this time or constituted in Carthage an acceptable holy club within the Church; cf. Tabbernee, *Opposition to Montanism* 137). But to so deduce is to disregard the doctrinal bias of Cyprian's collection: clear examples of variance in Trinitarian dogma were required. Patripassians (or Sabellians) appeared in the late-second and early-third centuries as a Modalist branch of Monarchianism, holding that in the Godhead the only differentiation was a mere succession of modes or operations; hence God the Father suffered as the Son (thus the name "Patripassian"). Their principal proponents were Praxeas (the target of Tertullian's *Adv. Praxeum*), Noetus (Hippol. *Contra Noetum*), and Sabellius. See e.g. Harnack, *History of Dogma* 3.1 (1894) 1 ff.

Anthropians: i.e. those who denied that Jesus Christ was God but claimed he was a mere man (*anthrōpos*) who was anointed with the Holy Spirit at his baptism and hence became the Christ, thus belonging to an Adoptionist branch of Monarchianism. Such were the followers of Theodotus of Byzantium (fl. late second century), on whom see Euseb. *H.E.* 5.28; Hippol. *Philos.* 7.35 f., 10.23 f. GCS Hippol. 3.222 f. and 282; Epiphanius. *Haer.* 54 f. GCS Epiph. 2.317 ff. (they were notable as partisans of Melchizedek; cf. Beryllus of Bostra, Euseb. *H.E.* 6.33. For further details Harnack, *History* 20 ff.

Valentinians: a Gnostic sect named after its founder, Valentinus (fl. mid-second century), arguably the most influential of the Gnostics. According to his doctrine, God the Demiurge (the God of the

O.T.) was the creator of the visible world, whereas the “aeon” Christ, uniting Himself to the man Jesus at his baptism, brought gnosis and redemption to men. Iren. *Adv. haer.* 1 and Tert. *Adv. Valent.* are major sources, as well as the Nag Hammadi “Jung Codex.” For an exhaustive study, Sagnard, *La gnose valentinienne*.

Apelletians: followers of Apelles, the best-known Gnostic disciple of Marcion, who rejected Marcion’s dualism. By their teaching the Demiurge became a creature of God, an angel who created the world; Christ came down from that (good) God—not the Demiurge—but His (real) body did not come from the Virgin but from the four elements of the stars to which it was restored after the ascension. An important source is Euseb. *H.E.* 5.13.1 ff; for a useful collection of *testimonia*, Grant, *Second Century Christianity* 84 ff.

Ophites: another second-century Gnostic group. They opposed the God of the O.T., glorified His opponent, the serpent (Greek: *ophis*) as the Illuminator and Liberator of men, and they cursed Jesus (of Nazareth), Orig. *C. Cels.* 6.27 f. SC 147.244 ff. Iren. *Adv. haer.* 1.30 SC 264.364 ff. is the *locus classicus* on their relationship with other Gnostic sects, especially the Naassenes.

Marcionites: The importance of Marcionites can be measured by the number of writers who proffered refutations—not only those of Tertullian (which we have) but those of Justin, Rhodo, Theophilus of Antioch, Dionysius of Corinth, Philip of Gortyn, Modestus, and Hippolytus (which are lost). Marcion’s *floruit* was the second half of the second century; he founded a long-surviving institutional church which spread throughout the Mediterranean and, notoriously, he revised the scriptural canon and re-edited the Scriptures to accommodate his dualistic doctrines. See n. 18 below for remarks on his teaching relevant to the present passage. For some works on Marcion, Harnack, TU 45 (2nd ed. 1924); Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence*; Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament*.

This catalogue of heretics is repeated in Aug. *Contra Cresc.* 4.61.75 CSEL 52.574, with the addition of *Novatiani* and *Arriani*.

15. An echo of Eph. 4.5, one of four clear allusions to this text in *Ep.* 73 (already in §§1.2 and 2.1 and again in §13.3), Fahey 486.

16. Matt. 28.18 f., Fahey 328 ff.

17. *insinuat trinitatem, cuius sacramento gentes tinguerentur*. Here Cyprian uses, exceptionally, the verb *tinguo* of orthodox baptism, but the exception is explicable. In his habitual rhetorical fashion he is echoing the wording of the biblical text just cited (*docete gentes omnes tinguentes eos*). On Cyprian's general use of *tinguo*, *tinctio*, etc., see *Epp.* 70 n. 15, 72 n. 6. On *sacramentum* (in the context, a close equivalent of *fides*?) see de Ghellinck et al. 166 f., and compare *Sent. episc.* LXXXVII.7 H. 3.440: *haereticos id est hostes Christi non integram sacramenti habere confessionem*.

18. Cyprian has deliberately chosen descriptive phrases and clauses to highlight Marcionite divergences in doctrine on the Godhead and the scheme of redemption. Thus *Deum patrem creatorem*: by contrast, for Marcion, God the Creator of the world was not the Father of Christ; he was Marcion's second god, the god of the O.T., of the Jews, the law, and the prophets. Thus, too, *filium Christum de virgine Maria natum . . . qui resurrectionem carnis . . . primus initiavit*: for Marcion, Christ was not born of the Virgin Mary but was a bodily manifestation of Marcion's first god, the supreme god of love. And in the Marcionite scheme of things redemption was limited to the soul, whereas the flesh was destined for destruction and did not partake of salvation (see e.g., Iren. *Adv. haer.* 1.27.1 ff SC 264.348 ff.). The whole passage is a notable illustration of the manner in which credal statements came to be formulated in the context of polemic against heresies: see Holland, *Stud. patr.* 13 (1975) 189 ff., esp. 196 f.; cf. Hanson, *Tradition* 85 ff.

By talking thus of Marcionite baptism *trinitatis sacramento*, Cyprian is clearly not intending to impute here that Marcionites baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ only. Discussion in Usener, *Weihnachtsfest* 188 ff.; Benson 406 f.; Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* 7 f., 22 (App. 3); Stenzel, *Scholastik* 30 (1955) 372 ff.; von Campenhausen, VC 25 (1971) 12 ff. There has been allusion to John 1.14 in the clause *qui sermo caro factus sit* (Fahey 372), and to 1 Pet. 2.24 in the clause *qui peccata nostra portaverit* (Fahey 521 f.).

19. Jer. 15.18, Fahey 224.

20. *non est necesse ei venienti manum inponi ut spiritum sanctum consequatur et signetur*. On "sealing" as part of the ceremony for the reception of the Holy Spirit, see *Epp.* 69 n. 10 and 70 n. 9 (with bibliography, adding Dölger, *Spragis* 170 ff.). Being signed on the

forehead with the sign of the cross appears to have completed the baptismal ceremony; cf. n. 24 below; *Ad Demet.* 22 CCL 3A.48: *Evadere enim solos posse qui renati et signo Christi signati fuerint . . . quod autem sit hoc signum et qua in parte corporis positum manifestat . . . Deus dicens: . . . notabis signum super frontes . . .*; and Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 21 ed. Botte 90: *Et consignans in frontem offerat osculum.*

21. John 20.21 ff., Fahey 403, with allusion in §7.1 to Matt. 16.19, Fahey 311 f. The line of argument is clearly based on the close association (as made so often by Cyprian) between forgiveness of sins and baptism and on the equation of Peter as first bishop (thus receiving the powers to forgive sins on behalf of all later bishops). Cf. *Ep.* 3 n. 16.

22. Cyprian's illustrations are drawn from Num. 16.1 ff. and Lev. 10.1 ff.; for discussion see Fahey 574 ff.

23. Allusion to Acts 8.14 ff., Fahey 412 f. There are awkward difficulties here for Cyprian. His arguments elsewhere require that true baptism *ipso facto* confers the Holy Spirit, yet he is here forced in his explanation to have the conferring of the Holy Spirit separated from baptism and thus momentarily to admit of the concept of incomplete but legitimate baptism (*quod deerat id a Petro et Jobanne factum est*). Augustine, alluding to the exploitation of Acts 8.14 ff. which Cyprian is now meeting, tartly remarks: "Far be it from us, when we are seeking the truth, to use such arguments" (*absit ut, cum verum quaerimus, talibus argumentis utamur, De bapt.* 3.19.25 CCL 51.216). See *De rebapt.* 3 H.3.73 for an example of such an argument. On Cyprian's difficulties here see further Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* 173 f.

24. *spiritum sanctum consequantur et signaculo dominico consummentur.* For *signaculum* compare n. 20 above, and other passages there cited (the reference is most likely to be to the act of *consignatio*, the signing with the cross, which completed the initiation ceremony). Cyprian's remarks imply that if the washing ceremony of baptism was performed by a nonepiscopal agent (cf. Tert. *De bapt.* 17.1 f. CCL 1.291, allowing for such exceptions), then the laying-on of hands and sealing were still reserved for the bishop in order to complete the initiatory rites. So, too, *De rebapt.* 4 H.3.74: *hodierna quoque die non potest dubitari esse usitatum et evenire solitum ut plerique post baptismum sine impositione manus episcopi de saeculo exeant . . .*, and *ibid.* 10 H.3.82: *si a minore clero per necessitatem traditum*

[*baptisma*] fuerit, eventum expectemus ut aut suppleatur a nobis [sc. *episcopis*] . . . ; Conc. Elvira can. 38 Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.242 (quoted in *Ep.* 69 intro.). Note *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 17 H. 444: the power to baptize is essentially the bishop's: (*Iesus Christus . . . potestatem baptizandi episcopis dedit*).

On the use of the verb *consummo* (in the sense of "consecrate"?) see Botte, *Bull. du Cange* 12 (1937) 43 ff.

25. Citation of Deut. 4.24 (Fahey 89) and allusion to Num. 25.7 ff. (Fahey 577 f.).

26. There is allusion to Gen. 2.8 f. The image of the Church as Paradise (often as the lost Paradise regained) is common in early Christian literature. Some examples are *Ad Diog.* 12.1 ff.; Iren. *Adv. haer.* 5.20.2 SC 153.258; Hippol. *Comm. in Dan.* 1.17 GCS Hipp. 1.28 f.; Tert. *Adv. Marc.* 2.4.4 CCL 1.479; and cf. *Epp.* 69.2.1, 75.15.1 (the Church as *bortus conclusus*). For discussion K. Delehaye, *Ecclesia mater* 136 f.

27. Allusion to Matt. 3.10, Fahey 264 f.

28. *has arbores rigat quattuor fluminibus id est evangeliiis quattuor*. The four rivers of Paradise are, of course, derived from Gen. 2.10 ff. They were closely associated with baptism, thus figuring frequently in baptismal décor: see e.g. Davies, *Architectural Setting* 35 ff.; L. de Bruyne in *Miscellanea . . . Mohlberg* 202 f.; and compare the inscription referring to Geon, Fison, Tigris, and Eufrata above the entrance to the "baptistery" of the fourth-century basilica at Ostia, Meiggs, *Roman Ostia* 397 f., 474, 563; von Gerkan, *Röm. Quartal.* 47 (1939) 20 ff.; Klauser, *ibid.* 25 ff.; Egger, *Röm. Quartal.* 55 (1950) 226 ff., Marrou, *Bull. Soc. Nat. Antiq. de France* (1966) 160 ff.; Février, *Mélanges d'arch. et d'hist.* 70 (1958) 307 ff. The four rivers were variously allegorized—already by Hellenistic Jews (e.g. in Philo as the four cardinal virtues, *Leg. alleg.* 1.19.63 ff., *De posteritate Caini* 36.124 ff.), thereby starting a rich Christian tradition (some examples are Paulinus of Nola *Ep.* 32.10 ML 61.336; Aug. *De civit. dei* 13.21 CSEL 40.645; Victorinus Pictav. *Comm. in Apoc.* 4.4 CSEL 49.54); for further reading Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri* 13 ff.; Février, *Rev. arch. crist.* 32 (1956) 179 ff.; Schlee, *Die Iconographie der Paradiesesflüsse* 29 ff. Compare also the passage in Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 3.11.7 f. SC 211.158 ff.) arguing for the necessity of there being four, and four only, Gospels.

29. Allusion to Tit. 3.11, Fahey 518 f.

30. See John 7.38, Fahey 386 f., and for literature on this imagery in patristic writings see *Ep.* 63 n. 21.

31. *si sacramentum unitatis agnoscimus*. *Sacramentum* here verges on the sense of “sacred precept”; see Poukens in de Ghellinck et al. 196 ff., and for the locution cf. *De unit.* 4 (TR) and 7 CCL 3.252 and 254 and *Ep.* 69.6.1 (*quam sit inseparabile unitatis sacramentum*).

32. Hartel, following older editors, inserts in his text here the unnecessary addition *si templum Dei factus est*, presumed to have fallen out.

33. *cum tres unum sint*. There is allusion to 1 John 5.8, Fahey 534, and see Thiele, ZNTW 50 (1959) 68 ff., on Cyprian’s text of this passage. Cyprian continues to be addressing his argument to the Marcionite creed (cf. n. 18 above) as a sample illustrative of all other heresies (§5.1).

34. *quasi consuetudo maior sit veritate aut non id . . . sequendum quod in melius fuerit a sancto spiritu revelatum*. Cyprian reverts to themes which he had introduced in *Ep.* 71.2.1, 3.1 f., the conflict of *consuetudo* with *veritas* and *ratio*, and the occurrence of revelation *in melius*, improving on received tradition. Cyprian is now noticeably less circumspect in his formulation. For discussion see *Ep.* 71 nn. 7 and 11, adding Hanson, *Tradition* 140 ff., and Bakhuizen van den Brink, VC 13 (1959) 65 ff. Felix *a Buslacenis* has an even more uncompromising formulation: *nemo consuetudinem rationi et veritati praeponat, quia consuetudinem ratio et veritas semper excludit*, *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*. 63 H. 456. Cyprian accepts inspiration by the Spirit but does not theologize about the processes of such inspiration, Fahey 44 f.

35. 1 Tim. 1.13, Fahey 506. On Cyprian’s text (*miser ricordiam merui*) see Bakhuizen van den Brink, *Stud. patr.* 3 (1961) 335.

36. *quod accepimus ab apostolis hoc sequimur*. Pope Stephen notoriously urged that he was upholding the tradition of the apostles Peter and Paul, e.g. as reported in *Ep.* 75.6.2. But Cyprian has already faced similar claims based on the practice of the earliest Church in *Ep.* 71.2.1 (*quando apud veteres haereseos et schismatum prima adhuc fuerint initia*; cf. *De rebapt.* 6 H. 3.77 urging acquiescence with *tot . . . apostolorum et episcoporum auctoritati cum bona ratione*). He need not here, therefore, have Stephen primarily in view as his adversary: on mat-

ters of history Stephen was not the only “romantic” (cf. Hanson, *Tradition* 151).

37. Phil. 1.18, Fahey 495 (there is some uncertainty whether Cyprian’s text had *adnuntiatur* or *adnuntietur*; the latter, adopted by Hartel, was also what Augustine read, *De bapt.* 4.11 CSEL 51.241). Cyprian adopts the procedure, unusual for him, of providing a lengthy paraphrase of the context of the Pauline citation in order to refute improper exegesis of it; he is himself less cautious about quoting verses out of context elsewhere.

For the exploitation of this text in the baptismal dispute, compare the Armenian fragment attributed to the first letter on baptism from Dionysius of Alexandria to Sixtus (Conybeare, *Eng. Hist. Rev.* 25 [1910] 113): “Inasmuch as you have written thus . . . namely that it shall suffice only to lay hands on those who shall have made profession in baptism, *whether in pretence or in truth*, of God Almighty and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. . . .”

38. *in nomine Christi baptizare*. Cyprian is making a point about the inefficacious use by heretics of the Name in baptism, not about some heretical and non-Trinitarian baptismal formula; cf. nn. 13 and 18 above.

39. There are allusions to 2 Tim. 2.17 (Fahey 512 f.), 2 Cor. 6.14 (Fahey 466 f.), and 1 John 4.3 (Fahey 533).

40. It is reasonable to suspect that the *quomodocumque* (“no matter in what way”) may be a rhetorical flourish (cf. *Ep.* 74.5.1). Firmilian, at least, in *Ep.* 75.10.4 f. is careful to underline the fact that the demonically-possessed prophetess whom he exemplifies punctiliously used standard and *orthodox* words and ceremonial for baptism, yet her baptism was still hopelessly unacceptable.

41. Matt. 7.21 (Fahey 288), followed by Matt. 24.5 and 25.5 (Fahey 322 ff.).

42. Cyprian has quoted John 14.6 and 17.3, Fahey 377 f., 399 f. He appears still to be addressing Marcionite doctrine on the Trinity (cf. nn. 18 and 33 above). If this is so, his phrasing here (*non cognito immo et blasphemato Deo patre*) certainly suggests that the first Person of the Trinity was omitted from the Marcionite baptismal formula, but that does not fit with our evidence elsewhere (e.g. Aug. *De bapt.* 3.15.20, 7.16.31 CSEL 51.211, 354; tellingly, there is no hint throughout Tertullian’s voluminous anti-Marcionite writings). Cy-

prian may be referring to the Marcionite's insulting failure to give due recognition to the status and paternity of the Father (they do not have, therefore, the full and united Trinity, *plena et adunata Trinitas*, §18.1, in whose Name baptism is to be administered); or he may have now conveniently, and for the moment, shifted his target to some other Gnostic sect. But given the way his argument proceeds, he appears to continue to have Marcionite doctrine in view.

43. Acts 2.38 f., Fahey 409 f. There is also allusion to 1 Cor. 10.4 in Moses' baptism of the Jews.

44. Matt. 28.19, Fahey 328 ff.

45. *negans Deum creatorem Christi*. Cyprian's incautious phrasing (it could be easily misconstrued) is aimed against the Marcionite denial that the Creator God was Father of Christ; cf. n. 18 above. The argument at the beginning of this paragraph seems modelled on 1 Jn. 2.23, Fahey 532.

46. A composite set of allusions to John 14.28 (Father greater), John 17.1 (Christ glorified), Matt. 20.22 (the cup), all omitted by Fahey.

47. John 6.65 (Fahey 385) followed by Matt. 15.13 (Fahey 308 f.); there has also been allusion to 1 John 2.23.

48. Luke 16.8, Fahey 354.

49. Exod. 20.12 (Fahey 76) and Matt. 15.4 (Fahey 307 f.).

50. Mark 3.29 quoted in *Test.* 3.28 CSEL 3.122 f. to establish the proposition *non posse in ecclesia remitti ei qui in Deum deliquerit*. On the subject of "eternal sins" see e.g. *Ep.* 67 n. 22 (blasphemy), *Ep.* 55 n. 87 (adultery), *Epp.* 8 n. 25, 15 n. 12 (idolatry).

51. There is allusion to 1 Cor. 13.3, Fahey 442 ff. For Cyprian's firm line that martyrdom is impossible outside the Church, see *Epp.* 52 n. 7, 55 n. 76, 60 n. 13. His argument assumes agreement on that point. On the notion of "baptism of blood" (i.e. martyrdom giving or repeating the benefits of baptism) see *Ep.* 57 n. 22, adding the *Excursus* ("Die Bluttauf des Märtyrers") in Lohse, *Märtyrer und Gottesrecht* 211 ff. Melito *frag.* 12 SC 123.236 would provide the earliest example; its authenticity is contested, however. Note the discussion also on the topic in *De rebapt.* 11, 14 f. H. 3.82 f., 86 ff.

52. *adulterae aquae contagio tinctus*. On Cyprian's use of *tinguo* see *Ep.* 70 n. 15 and cf. n. 17 above. For Cyprian's celebrated formulation *salus extra ecclesiam non est* see *Ep.* 4 n. 37.

53. John 3.5, Fahey 374 f. See *Ep.* 72 n. 8 for similar exploitation of this verse—and the concept of *sacramentum utrumque* (on which see also *Ep.* 70 n. 19).

54. *catechuminos nobis opponunt*. On catechumens see *Ep.* 8 n. 28; for the argument here compare *can. Hippol.* 101 ed. Achelis 91: the catechumen put to death for the faith before baptism has been baptized in his own blood; he is not inferior to one who has received the sacrament.

55. Allusions to Luke 12.50, Fahey 351 f. (“another baptism”) and Luke 23.43, Fahey 366 (the good thief).

56. *potens est Dominus misericordia sua . . . eos qui . . . in ecclesia dormierunt . . . non separare*. For the emphatic turn of phrase *potens est Dominus* see *Ep.* 17 n. 4; for the Christian use of *dormio* see *Ep.* 21 n. 22, *Ep.* 1 n. 25. Observe the open admission now of differing past practice (*in praeteritum*): Cyprian stands in a confident position with 70 other bishops behind him—and note Cyprian’s typical, and pastoral, egress from the logic of his otherwise hard-line argument (cf. *Ep.* 55.13.1 on penitence granted to those mistakenly thought to be dying).

57. Acts 19.1 ff. (not in Fahey). This attitude towards John’s baptism is somewhat inconsistent with *Ep.* 69.11.2 (where see n. 36).

58. Allusions to Matt. 11.11 and Luke 1.15, 17 (omitted by Fahey).

59. See Gen. 27.27 ff., Fahey 61 ff., 569 f. (there is presumably no secondary allusion to Hebrews 12.16 f., cf. Fahey 40 f.). On the word for “birthright” (*primatus*) see *Ep.* 69 n. 31.

60. The apposite Pauline text (1 Cor. 11.16, Fahey 458) in the centre of this section is carefully framed at the introductory end by the words *cum quibus* [= *coepiscopis*] *divinam concordiam tenemus* and at the concluding end by *servatur a nobis concordia sacerdotii*. Even if we had no other evidence, we would conclude from such protestation that there has been major disputation within the episcopal ranks. And Cyprian’s twofold insistence on *mediocritas* (*pro nostra mediocritate* in §26.1 *init.* and *quantum valuit nostra mediocritas* in §26.2) would further suggest that his had been a major part in such disputation. Augustine comments approvingly on Cyprian’s insistence upon collegiate tolerance in *Ep.* 108.9 CSEL 34. 620 f. cf. *De unico bapt.* 13.22 ff. CSEL 53.22 ff.

61. *libellum . . . de bono patientiae . . . permittente Domino et inspirante conscripsimus*. (i) *libellum*: Cyprian sends a copy of his tractate *De bono patientiae* CCL 3A. 118 ff.); it studiously excludes allusion to the present dispute, but was it perhaps composed as an opening sermon to the Council of 71 (the opening chapter suggests a homiletic setting)? For a review of its contents, Spanneut, *Mél. sc. relig.* 23 (1966) 7 ff. Tertullian's treatise *De patientia* (CCL 1.299 ff.) provided the model, and see SC 291 (ed. J. Molager) 129 ff. for a recent analysis, and text with commentary. (ii) *permittente Domino et inspirante*. No mere pious cliché; Cyprian believed in direct, personal inspiration. See e.g. *Ep.* 16 nn. 27 and 30. Presumably, *permittente Domino* means no more than that Cyprian's continued survival in the world is due to the hand of the Lord.

LETTER 74

Contents: Pompeius has asked for a copy of Stephen's reply. In that letter Stephen has foolishly insisted that there should be no change to tradition: those who come from heresy are to be admitted to communion only with the laying-on of hands in penitence (§1). But that is tantamount to saying that all heresies have valid baptism. Where in Scripture is this "tradition" to be found? What we find in Scripture is rather the condemnation of heretics as antichrists—and worse heresies were still to come (§2). Stephen is placing a *human* tradition before divine precept (§3)—and a tradition modelled on the behaviour of heretics at that (§4)! If a man can be truly baptized outside the Church, then he can there receive also the Spirit whom Christ has sent (§5). But only the bride of Christ can give birth to sons of God: if a man is to have God for Father, he must have the Church for Mother (§§6 and 7). A bishop fails in his duty to give honour to God if he befriends those who blaspheme against Him and if he is the foe of those who protect the unity of His Church (§8). No custom must be allowed to stand in the way of truth (§9). And a bishop ought not only to teach: he must be teachable as well. The Gospels and the apostles supply us with the truth (§10). And that source insists that the Church is a unity and that there is one baptism only, in that one

Church (§11). That is why those who come from heresy must be baptized in that one baptism of the Church (§12).

Date and circumstances: *Ep.* 74, with its reference to Stephen's reply to an African letter (§1.1), must come at least after *Ep.* 72, the first known letter sent by the African bishops to Stephen on the baptismal question. And there is every reasonable ground for placing *Ep.* 74 after *Ep.* 73 as well. At several points in *Ep.* 74 we are given in mere summary form arguments developed more fully in *Ep.* 73 (compare *Ep.* 74.7.3 with *Ep.* 73.4.1 ff., *Ep.* 74.5.1 with *Ep.* 73.16.1 ff.). But more significantly, and persuasively, *Ep.* 73 makes no mention of Stephen's reply and its erroneous notions, and yet it was pertinent to Cyprian's purpose to inform Iubaianus fully on the matter; a copy of *Ep.* 74 was not included among the other enclosures of *Ep.* 73 (*Epp.* 70, 71; *De bono pat.*). And while Cyprian can end *Ep.* 73 on a liberal and conciliatory note of live and let live (§26), there is nothing of that generous-hearted tolerance now in this letter. Moderation has been thrown aside; intemperance and intransigence have taken its place. Whatever else has happened, Stephen's letter, with its infuriating text, arrived after *Ep.* 73, and before *Ep.* 74.

The next, and more difficult, question is whether *Ep.* 74 was composed before or after *Ep.* 75 (letter from Firmilian).

Cyprian had sent Firmilian a lengthy and fulsome document (*copiose et plenissime dicta*, *Ep.* 75.13.1) which Firmilian had read over many times and committed to memory (*saepe repetita memoriae mandavimus*, *Ep.* 75.4.1). Firmilian's reply to this lost document in fact consists largely of elaborations of or variations on arguments expressed by Cyprian in the extant correspondence; no doubt, copies of Cyprian's earlier letters had been included with his letter to Firmilian in Cyprian's usual way (see *Ep.* 75 intro.). But *Ep.* 75 spends most time on material to be found only in *Ep.* 74 (Cyprian's commentary upon Stephen's letter) and it makes, in addition, a long list of points made elsewhere only in *Ep.* 74 (e.g. *Ep.* 75.5.2 f. ~ *Ep.* 74.2.4 f.; *Ep.* 75.13.2 ~ *Ep.* 74.5.4; *Ep.* 75.14.1 ~ *Ep.* 74.6.1 f.). We can draw one of two conclusions from this evidence. Either a copy of *Ep.* 74 was sent to Firmilian (*Ep.* 74 was, therefore, written before *Ep.* 75), or *Ep.* 74 is merely a *réchauffé* of the (lost) letter Cyprian sent to Firmilian (*Ep.* 74 was, therefore, written after *Ep.* 75). I do not see

how one can choose; but I merely observe that, on the principle that hypotheses ought not to be multiplied needlessly, it is more economical to suppose that Firmilian found a copy of *Ep.* 74 among the papers Cyprian had sent on to him.

The internal evidence of *Ep.* 74 would strongly suggest that the public quarrel between Cyprian and Stephen has been going on for some time before this letter was written (see nn. 4 and 29 below on §§1.1, 8.2). If we do make the supposition that *Ep.* 74 comes before *Ep.* 75, then we must be aware of the consequences: on this internal evidence we are compelled to deduce that *pax* between Stephen and Cyprian had been ruptured *before* the great Council was mustered on Sept. 1, 256 (see further *Ep.* 75 intro.).

For discussion Ritschl, *De epistulis* 34 ff., 42; Harnack, *Chronologie* 358 f.; von Soden, *Briefsammlung* 29 f.; Benson 360 f.; Nelke, *Chronologie* 104 ff.; Duquenne, *Chronologie* 27.

We receive only a tantalizing scrap from Stephen's (lost) letter (§1.2), and we do not fare much better from Firmilian (*Ep.* 75.17.1 f. [Stephen's pride in being Peter's successor], ? 18.1 [*inquit*] = *Ep.* 74.5.1 [*tribuunt*], ? 25.4 [insulting remarks about Cyprian: verbally reported to Cyprian rather than written?]). One is led to wonder whether Stephen's letter was simply a curt and imperious note, containing little in the way of argument that Cyprian might grapple with. As a result, *Ep.* 74 adds little that is new to the basic arguments that support Cyprian's position, and we gain very little help towards understanding the position of his opponents.

What we do have new is a barrage of polemical abuse fired against Stephen (contrast *Ep.* 72)—*error*, *obstinatio dura*, *praesumptio*, *animi caecitas*, *pravitas*, *studium . . . contumaciae*; *superba*, *prava*, *falsa*; *inperite*, *inprovide*—and an impressive outburst of indignation in §§8.2 f. And in repudiating the mainstay of Stephen's defense—*traditio* in an apostolic see (§§2.2 ff.)—Cyprian is forced to enunciate a strong counterline: one must go back to the first principles of Christian truth, to be found exclusively in the Scriptures of the evangelists and the apostles (§§10.2 f.). He is less evangelical in other contexts.

Augustine has a running commentary on *Ep.* 74 in *De bapt.* 5.23.31 ff. CSEL 51.289 ff. *Ep.* 74 was still being cited in controversy in the mid-sixth century, Facundus Hermianensis, *Pro def. trium capit.* 10.3 ML 67.775.

1. *Cyprianus Pompeio fratri s.* There is only one securely-known African bishop thus named, viz. Pompeius Sabratensis, who, being absent at the meeting in Carthage in September 256, recorded his *sententia* through his fellow Tripolitanian bishop Natalis as proxy (Natalis coming from Oea, 65 km further on to the east), *Sent.* 84 H. 460. This present Pompeius is clearly also a bishop (e.g. §8.1), who has also been absent from meetings in Carthage (copies of more than one document have already been sent on to him, setting out in full the case supporting “rebaptism,” §1.1). We ought sensibly to identify the two. See further on Pompeius *Ep.* 44 n. 9 (an Italian homonym?), Maier, *L’épiscopat* 383, and on another Tripolitanian bishop *Ep.* 57 n.1; and on Sabrata see Gascou, *Politique municipale* 82 f., and Lepelley, *Les cités* 2.372 ff. (with further references). Pompeius did not attend any other episcopal meetings of which we have detailed records; it entailed a 600 km overland journey to get from Sabrata to Carthage.

2. *plene ea quae de haereticis baptizandis dicenda sunt complexi simus in epistulis.* We do not know precisely what these letters were: the wording suggests the dossier probably included *Ep.* 73, regarded by Cyprian as his fullest statement on the issue in September 256 (*Sent. episc.* LXXXVII 87 H. 461: *meam sententiam plenissime exprimit epistula quae ad Iubaianum . . . scripta est*). Had Pompeius in fact requested the dossier, the better to arrive at his *sententia* which was to be cast by proxy at that meeting in September of 256? The documents and this *Ep.* 74 helped to persuade Pompeius: he voted with Cyprian (see previous n.).

3. *quid mihi ad litteras nostras Stephanus frater noster rescripserit.* The change in number (*mibi . . . nostras*) may be significant (cf. *Ep.* 73 n. 2 with references to discussion elsewhere). Stephen has sent to Cyprian (*mibi*) a reply to a collective document (*litteras nostras*—not *meas*); one such collective letter was *Ep.* 72 (a copy of the proceedings of the Council of September 256 was no doubt also sent in due course). Stephen’s reply is most regrettably lost; Harnack, *Über verlorene Briefe* 13 ff., reconstructs its contents insofar as Cyprian’s and Firmilian’s reporting of them allows. Eusebius *H.E.* 7.3 (cf. Zonaras 12.22 ed. Dindorf 3.139) clearly refers to this same reply of Stephen’s.

4. *quo lecto magis ac magis eius errorem denotabis.* The addition of

the phrase *magis ac magis* ("more and more") overwhelmingly suggests that this is not the first time Stephen's *error* has been the subject of public attack. (If *Ep.* 74 is to be dated *before* the plenary meeting of September 1, 256, this evidence would thrust the beginnings of Cyprian's public dispute with Stephen even further back.)

5. *nihil innovetur nisi quod traditum est*. Stephen's formulation is clearly echoed in Euseb. *H.E.* 7.3: "Stephen, thinking that they ought not to make any innovation [*neōteron*] contrary to the tradition that had been established from the beginning [*archēthen*], was full of indignation," and Firmilian in *Ep.* 75.6.1 f., 17.1 ff. discloses that Stephen claimed nothing less than the apostolic authority of Peter and Paul for this *traditio*. Cyprian, in riposte, cannot claim a *rival* apostolic tradition for the African Church; his moves are, therefore, to deny the apostolic character of the Roman tradition (§§2.3 f.) and to urge the superior claims of truth over that (erroneous, nonapostolic) tradition of Stephen's (§§9.2 ff.). For an analysis of Stephen's words, Dölger, *AC* 1 (1929) 79 f., 319 (and cf. *Ep.* 30 n. 47); and for other similar formulations, Pietri, *Roma christiana* 298. Hippolytus *Adv. haer.* 9.12.26 GCS Hippol. 3.251 seems to point to a tradition of Roman abhorrence of rebaptism that was certainly older than Callistus: "In his day [= Callistus] for the first time they had the audacity to practise second baptism." See Benson 336 f.

6. *ut manus illis inponatur in paenitentiam*. Unfortunately we do not have the full argument of Stephen which led him to this conclusion. Comprehension is not aided by Cyprian's criticism of this passage (§§5.1 ff.); for he proceeds, confusingly, to argue as if Stephen had written not *in paenitentiam* but *ad sanctum spiritum accipiendum* and assumes that Stephen considers that heretical baptism has already fully remitted all sins (but not conferred the Spirit). Unless Stephen was hopelessly confused, this wording demonstrates that that at least cannot have been his position. For one inquiry about what that position may indeed have been, see Bévenot, *Hey. Journ.* 19 (1978) 129 ff.

7. *cum ipsi haeretici proprie alterutrum ad se venientes non baptizent*. The construing of *proprie* has occasioned difficulty. A number of translators associate the word with the preceding *haeretici* and interpret as "heretics in the proper sense" (as opposed to schismatics); cf. Rigaltius' gloss: *qui proprie ob propriam aliquam haeresin dicuntur haere-*

tici. Not only is this dubious Latin (some verb of naming would be expected for this sense), but it is rare to find so sharp a line drawn between heresy and schism at this date (though *Test.* 3.86 CCL 3.164 shows it could be made; see n. 24 below). It seems more natural, therefore, to associate the word with the following *alterutrum* (“individually and mutually”) as a simple means of reinforcing the notion of reciprocity, but I cannot provide a precise parallel (on Cyprian’s terms for reciprocity see Schrijnen and Mohrmann, *Studien* 1.152 f.; he does not use himself *alteruter* but see [*Ep.*] 77.3.3 *alterutro adiutores*). So I translate, but without great assurance, associating *proprie* with *baptizent* in the well-attested sense of “in their own way” = “using their own baptismal rite” (cf. *singulae haereses singula baptismata . . . habeant* §2.1, *quomodocumque baptizantur* §5.1—phrases implying plurality of heretical rites; so, too, Demetrius of Lepti Minus, *Sent. Episc. LXXXVII.* 36 H. 450: *cum haereses multae sint, pro earum numero et baptismata computabantur*).

It does not seem, however, that the precise sense, whatever it may be, was thought to be of great significance. Firmilian omits *proprie* when he refers verbatim to these words of Stephen’s in *Ep.* 75.7.1.

The puzzling feature is not just that Stephen should appear to cite heretical behaviour as a model for orthodox policy (cf. Iubaianus in *Ep.* 73.2.1.), but that we do know of at least one contemporary sect which insisted on “rebaptism,” viz. Novatianists—and they figured in the forefront of this whole dispute: *Ep.* 73.2.1, Dionysius of Alexandria *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.8 (we can hardly imagine that Novatianists singled out Catholic baptism alone as invalid). And we would expect Stephen to have classed Novatianists as *haeretici*, with Novatian (still alive, *Ep.* 69.3.2) laying claim to Stephen’s *cathedra* as his own. Further discussion in Vogt, *Coetus sanctorum* 170 ff. (Stephen has the practice of a *Splittergruppe* of Novatianists in mind?).

8. *universorum delicta in sinum suum coacervata congegit*. This is not merely the scoring of a rhetorical point. Cyprian was profoundly anxious about the defilement of the holy Church which would be occasioned by the admission to it of the unbaptized (= the inauthentically baptized). See intro. to *Ep.* 69 and *Ep.* 73.19.3; his sentiment is echoed no fewer than eight times in the *Sent. Episc. LXXXVII* (*Sent.* 1, 7, 26, 40, 41, 42, 53, 81, H. 437, 441, 446, 451, 454, 460).

9. Cyprian illustrates his point from two biblical passages, one from the Old Testament (Josh. 1.8, Fahey 98), the other from the New (Matt. 28.18 ff., Fahey 328 ff.). Cyprian here shows a clear categorization of the New Testament into Gospels and Epistles plus Acts: see Fahey 47 f.

10. There is allusion to Tit. 3.10 f. (Fahey 518 f.); that heretics are adversaries and antichrists was argued in *Ep.* 69.1.2 from Matt. 12.30 and 1 John 2.18 f.

11. *necdum quoque Marcion Ponticus de Ponto emersisset*. Marcion is mentioned again in §§7.3, 8.2. Cyprian there suggests that Stephen approved specifically of his baptism (*ut etiam de Marcionis baptismo . . . contendat filios Deo nasci*). But the wording may well mislead: the specificity could be Cyprian's own addition (cf. n. 25 below)—or Stephen may possibly have written in response to *Ep.* 73.4.1 ff. (Marcion taken by Cyprian as a sample heretic). While Firmilian echoes this present passage in *Ep.* 75.5.2 f., he does not impute to Stephen a specific defence of Marcionite baptism. The one heretic mentioned nominatim in the *Sent. Episc. LXXXVII* is indeed Marcion (*et quidam non erubescunt Marcionis baptismum probare*, *Sent.* 52 H. 454); but see *Ep.* 73.4.1 ff. for explanation.

Marcion's appearance in Rome from his home town of Sinope on the south coast of the Black Sea (*Pontus Euxinus*) is spoken of in terms of some savage Leviathan rising out of the sea: Marcion was a wealthy shipping merchant (Tert. *De praesc. haer.* 30.1 f. CCL 1.210). Tertullian had already made, at length, similar play of Marcion's origins, *Adv. Marc.* 1.1.3 ff. CCL 1.441 f. (cf. *Ep.* 52 n. 2 for word-play on the names of Novatian and Novatus). Marcion would have reached Rome in the 140s (on the dating see Blackman, *Marcion* 20 f. with references to other discussions).

12. *cuius magister Cerdon sub Hygino episcopo qui in urbe nonus fuit Romam venit*. The detail is not gratuitous: Cyprian is wishing to emphasize that Marcion was a relative latecomer on the heretical scene (cf. *Ep.* 75.5.2). Marcion was notoriously a disciple of Cerdon (Tert. *Adv. Marc.* 1.2.3 CCL 1.443: *habuit et Cerdonem quendam informatorem scandalii huius*), and Cerdon's *floruit* could be placed during the pontificate of Hyginus (c.138–42?); thus Irenaeus in both *Adv. haer.* 1.27.1 SC 264.348 and 3.4.3 SC 211.50 links Cerdon with the time of Hyginus. These passages of Irenaeus in fact tell us most that we

know of this obscure figure, along with Hippol. *Haer.* 7.37 GCS Hippol. 3.223 (cf. *ibid.* 10.19 GCS Hippol. 3.279 f.). He anticipated Marcion in separating the Creator God of the Old Testament from the Father of Christ and in arguing against the resurrection of the flesh. He came to Rome from Syria, according to Epiphanius *Haer.* 41.1 GCS Epiph. 2.90. For a good assembly of the relevant texts, Hilgenfeld, *Die Ketzergeschichte* 316 ff.

Cyprian states firmly that Hyginus was the ninth bishop of Rome. There is less certainty in our text of Irenaeus; he figures as ninth in *Adv. haer.* 1.27.1 (cited above) but as eighth in the *Latin* version of *Adv. haer.* 3.4.3 and in *Adv. haer.* 3.3.3 SC 211.50 and 36 (a variation reflected in Euseb. *H.E.* 4.11.1—the *Greek* version of *Adv. haer.* 3.4.3 [9th]—and 5.6.4). The most probable explanation is that by Cyprian's day the calculation was being made not so much in terms of "xth bishop after the apostles" but rather (as here) "the xth bishop in Rome" and that latter computation included Peter as the first bishop of Rome (for Cyprian's unequivocal view that the apostles were themselves the first bishops, see *Ep.* 3 n. 16; cf. *Epp.* 66 n. 17, 67 n. 12). This question has been the subject of much discussion: Koch, *Rich. relig.* 5 (1929) 149 ff. (Cyprian had access to a Latin version of Irenaeus?); Turner in Swete's *Essays* 138 ff.; Dix, *Laudate* 16 (1938) 172 ff.; Caspar, *Die älteste röm. Bischofsliste* 241 ff.; Klauser, *Gesammelte Arbeiten* 121 ff.; RAC 2 (1954) s.v. "Bischofsliste" 411 (L. Koep); Pietri, *Roma christiana* 389 ff.; O'Connor, *Peter in Rome* 27 ff. (with other references).

13. *in Deum patrem creatorem blasphemare instituit*: on Marcion's view of the Godhead see *Ep.* 73 n. 18.

14. Isa. 29.13 (Fahey 201), followed by Mark 7.9 (Fahey 333 f.) and 1 Tim. 6.3 f. (Fahey 509 f.). The first two passages were cited together in *Epp.* 63.14.2 and 67.2.1, the second and third together in *Ep.* 43.6.1 f. Here, for good rhetorical measure, Cyprian quotes all three, one from the Old Testament, one from the Gospels, one from the Epistles (cf. n. 9 above).

15. *ut ad celebranda sacramenta caelestia disciplinam lux de tenebris mutuetur*. On *sacramenta* (here, for once, close to the modern sense) see Poukens 214 ("cérémonies sacrées"), and on *disciplina* ("moral guidance"), a favourite with Cyprian in referring to church teaching-cum-practice, see the studies cited in *Ep.* 11 n. 9.

16. *quae vero est animi caecitas, quae pravitas, fidei unitatem . . . nolle cognoscere?* So Hartel. But it is tempting to alter the punctuation, placing the comma after (and not before) *fidei* and producing rhetorical chiasmus and easier sense (“what blindness of soul, what perverseness of faith . . .”).

17. *si effectum baptismi maiestati nominis tribuunt . . . cur non in eiusdem Christi nomine illic et manus inponitur. . . .* Cyprian here reverts to a question he had dealt with earlier and more fully in *Ep.* 73.16.1 ff., and see also *Ep.* 73 nn. 13 and 18 (baptism in the Name of Jesus only?). Observe that he does not assign the argument to Stephen himself (*tribuunt . . . contendunt*). He assumes, nevertheless, that the laying-on of hands when the heretic joins the Catholic Church is *ad accipiendum spiritum sanctum* (cf. *Epp.* 69.11.3, 72.1.1, 73.6.2), whereas Stephen has termed it *in paenitentiam* (§1.2). This assumption enables him (if we read the present text) to draw the surprising conclusion that heretics do not attempt to impart the Holy Spirit—which elsewhere he more reasonably assumes they do (implied e.g. in *Epp.* 69.8.3, 70.2.3). This odd conclusion leads one to suspect that Hartel’s text may not be sound; in fact, *cur non* before *in eiusdem Christi nomine* is not found in a significant number of mss. If these words are omitted, the sense becomes more comprehensible: “. . . and if hands are there laid in the Name of the same Christ, . . . why does the same power of the same Name . . . have no efficacy?” Firmilian’s paraphrase of this argument of Cyprian’s in *Ep.* 75.18.1 f. is compatible with such an emendation.

18. Gal. 3.27, Fahey 475 f., with allusion to 1 Cor. 3.16, Fahey 444 f. (“temple of God”) and Eph. 4.22 ff., Fahey 487 (“new man”).

19. *cum nativitas secunda spiritalis sit . . . dicant quod possit quis . . . spiritaliter nasci, ubi spiritum negent esse.* This form of argument (to our minds verbal, and superficial) was meant to be taken seriously (cf. *Ep.* 70 n. 9 on *chrismate . . . gratiam Christi*). For the “waters of regeneration” see Tit. 3.5, Fahey 518.

20. *hominem sanctificare aqua sola non potest, nisi habeat et spiritum sanctum.* Many interpret the conditional clause “unless he [= the baptismal candidate] possesses the Holy Spirit as well.” That scarcely makes logical sense, and there is ample evidence to demonstrate that cleansed and *sanctified water* was regarded as essential for efficacious

baptism. See *Ep.* 69 intro. and *Ep.* 70 n. 6 (on *oportet . . . sanctificari aquam prius a sacerdote*) for discussion and references.

21. Allusion to Eph. 4.22 ff., cf. Fahey 487 (“old man,” “new man”), followed by quotation of Tit. 3.5, Fahey 518, and Eph. 5.25 f., Fahey 489 f. Cyprian links his quotation of Tit. 3.5 with his text by playing on the words *regeneratio, generare, generat*.

22. Gen. 2.7, Fahey 557 f. (*insufflavit in faciem eius flatum vitae*). Observe Aug. *Quaest. in Hept.* 1.9 CSEL 28.7: his text of Gen. 2.7 read *spiritum vitae* but he preferred the less ambiguous rendering *flatum vitae* still to be found in some versions (*quod melius quidam codices habent*). The latter was Cyprian’s reading. Compare Tert. *Adv. Marc.* 2.9.1 f. CCL 1.484 on the same ambiguity in translation (*tenendum quod Graeca scriptura signavit, adflatum nominans, non spiritum*).

23. *ut habere quis possit Deum patrem, habeat ante ecclesiam matrem*. Not for the first time has Cyprian turned such a conceit: cf. *De unit.* 6 CCL 3.253: *habere iam non potest Deum patrem qui ecclesiam non habet matrem*.

24. *nulla omnino haeresis, sed neque aliquod schisma. . . .* One of the very few turns of phrase where Cyprian appears to suggest there may be some significant distinction between heresy and schism. But the appearance here may mislead; this could well be simply a variation for rhetorical emphasis. Cf. *Sent. episc. LXXXVII.* 72 H. 457: *in haeresi intinctos sive in schismate*. On the two words in Cyprian see *Epp.* 3 n. 18, 43 n. 38, 49 n. 10. A distinction is implied by the anonymous author of *De rebapt.* 10 H. 3.82, but schism is still firmly, and significantly, put outside the pale of sound faith: *fides quoque non solum apud haereticos, verum etiam apud eos qui in schismate constituti sunt sana esse non possit*.

25. One can legitimately suspect that the list of heretics is Cyprian’s own inclusion, especially as they have already appeared together in *Ep.* 73.4.2; they need not be attributable specifically to Stephen. On these heretics see *Ep.* 73 n. 14.

26. *ubi blasphematur in patrem et Dominum Deum Christum*. See *Ep.* 73 n. 14 for their doctrines about the Father (e.g. Marcionites) and the Son (e.g. Valentinians).

27. *pro . . . religione sacerdotalis loci . . . an constare sacerdoti Dei ratio . . . in acceptum referenti. . . .* By *sacerdotalis/sacerdos* Cyprian means, of course, “episcopal”/“bishop”; for discussion see *Epp.* 40 n.

6, 43 n. 10, 67 n. 13. He is verbally anticipating the O.T. proof-text he is about to quote, addressed to *sacerdotes*. Cyprian seems deliberately to draw out the bookkeeping flavour of *constare ratio* (the account balances) and *in acceptum refero* (enter on credit side).

28. Mal. 2.1 f., Fahey 256.

29. *sacerdotes Dei . . . abstinendos putat?* Cyprian has carefully held this in reserve as the culminating blow in his impressive tirade. On the evidence available to us, there are two possible sources for this remark. Incident (i): *Ep.* 75.24.2 ff. records the occasion when episcopal envoys from Africa were not only refused an audience by Stephen in Rome but, on Stephen's instructions to the "universal brotherhood" (*fraternitati universae*), were denied hospitality and shelter, *pax et communio*. Here are bishops (*sacerdotes Dei*) excluded from communion with the Church in Rome. Firmilian implies that this exclusion was extended at least to Cyprian, if not to his supporters among the African bishops generally (*Stephanus . . . rumpens adversus vos pacem*, *Ep.* 75.6.2). Incident (ii): From Dionysius of Alexandria, writing to Stephen's successor Sixtus (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.4), we learn that Stephen "had previously sent instructions both concerning Helenus and Firmilian and all those from Cilicia and Cappadocia and, indeed, Galatia and all the peoples that border on these, that he did not intend to hold communion in the future with them either (*bōs oude ekeinois koinōnēsōn*) for this same reason, since, he says, they rebaptize heretics." This fulmination of Stephen's against these Eastern bishops appears to be referred to in *Ep.* 75.25.1 also: *cum tot episcopis per totum mundum dissensisse, pacem cum singulis . . . rumpentem, modo cum Orientalibus. . . .* The phrasing in Dionysius ("not . . . with them *either*," "for this *same* reason") can be explained if we suppose Stephen was already at loggerheads with the African Church when he fell out with these Eastern churches: i.e. incident (i) occurred before incident (ii).

Whichever of the two incidents Cyprian has here in mind (and it could well be both), the passage suggests one thing. *Ep.* 74 is unlikely to be written (as many suppose) immediately upon the arrival of those African episcopal envoys back in Carthage, returning posthaste with the bombshell news of their insulting and humiliating treatment [incident (i)]. Though obviously incensed, Cyprian is not in a white heat of fury. And this cannot be the first time Bishop Pom-

peius hears of so dramatic a development in the dispute: Cyprian is not imparting new information but making an effective *aside*, exploiting information already known.

We do not have any evidence that the quarrel was ever carried further than this rupture of *pax*. Augustine, at any rate, while well aware of Stephen's *threat* (*Stephanus . . . abstinendos putaverat*), insists that Cyprian displayed model forbearance in refusing to cause a schism (*nullum inter eos malum schismatis oreretur*): thus *De bapt.* 5.25.36 CSEL 51.292 and often elsewhere (e.g. *De bapt.* 1.18.28 CSEL 51.170 ff.—there are no *Cyprianistae* as there are *Donatistae*!; *De bapt.* 2.4.5 ff. CSEL 51.179 ff.; *De bapt.* 6.5.7 f. CSEL 51.302 f.; *De unico bapt.* 14.23 CSEL 53.23; *Stephanus . . . hoc facientes . . . excommunicandos esse censeret, . . . tamen Cyprianus cum eo in unitatis pace permansit*). Pacian echoes the sentiment, *Ep.* 2.7 ML 13.1062: *Cyprianus autem in concordia omnium, in pace communi, in confessorum grege passus est*. And there remains the significant fact (as Augustine never tires of iterating) that the Donatists were unable to exploit of their martyred hero an irrevocable break with Rome. A barrage of hot-tempered insults and angry menaces there most certainly were (cf. *Ep.* 75.25.4) and a scandalous breakdown in fraternal relations, but there was no formal “excommunication” in the modern canonical sense. For that we would need evidence of the same round of synodal gatherings, and exclusions from communion, as occurred concerning Novatian. So far as we know, nothing of the kind occurred: Stephen's was an isolated outburst, on our knowledge unsupported by even his fellow Italian bishops (cf. *Ep.* 75.24.2: *dum enim putas omnes a te abstineri posse, solum te ab omnibus abstinuisti*). Cyprian's biographer Pontius passes the whole affair by in silence.

For some discussions cf. Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.228 f.; Ernst, *ZfKT* 18 (1894) 473 ff., 19 (1895) 234 ff., and idem, *Papst Stephan I* 69 ff.; Nelke, *Chronologie* 129 ff.; Benson 353 f.; d'Alès, *Rev. des quest. hist.* 81 (1907) 387 ff.; Aubé, *Seconde moitié* 324 f., 329 f.; Hertling, *Civ. catt.* 3 (1958) 456 ff.; Sage 323 ff.; Hinchliff 94 ff.; and on excommunication see K. Hein, *Eucharist and Excommunication*, esp. 390 ff.

30. *ut serpentinis crinibus pullulantes . . . maioribus viribus venenorum suorum virus expromunt*. On the serpentine imagery (here rich in

sibilants) see the references in *Ep.* 69 n. 56 and cf. *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 29 H. 447; *de quorum ore virus, non vita . . . exprimitur.*

31. Luke 18.8, Fahey 358. Cyprian plays heavily on *fīdem* . . . *fideles* . . . *fīde* . . . *fideli virtute* in the dual senses of faith/loyalty. Stephen, we are left in no doubt, has forfeited his claim to *fides*.

32. *consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est.* Cyprian's boldest formulation on the theme of custom vs. truth, on which see *Epp.* 70 n. 4, 71 nn. 7 and 11, 73 n. 34, and cf. *Ep.* 75.19.1 ff. Tertullian has some tart phrases on the theme in *De virgin. vel.* 1.1 f. CCL 2.1209: *Dominus noster Christus veritatem se, non consuetudinem, cognominavit. . . . Quodcunque adversus veritatem sapit, hoc erit haeresis, etiam vetus consuetudo.*

33. Cyprian seems clearly to regard the deuterocanonical text of 1 Esdras (from which he quotes 4.38 ff.) as Holy Writ: see Fahey 40, 109 f. This is followed by John 14.6 (abbreviated), Fahey 377.

34. Allusions in §10.1 to 1 Tim. 3.2 ff., Fahey 507, and 2 Tim. 2.24, Fahey 514 f. (and see Aug. *De bapt.* 5.26.37 CSEL 51.292, cf. *ibid.* 4.5.7 CSEL 51.228 f.: Cyprian attained the ideal, being both *doctus* and *docibilis*). This is followed in §10.2 by a semiquotation (unusual in Cyprian) of 1 Cor. 14.30, Fahey 461 f., a passage which had been more fully exploited in *Ep.* 71.3.2. This allusion is poorly integrated with the argument; did Pompeius need only to be just reminded of the passage, for he had already read the discussion of its significance in his copy of *Ep.* 71 (cf. §1.1)?

Even in this forthright letter Cyprian shows himself more reticent in making outright claim to divine inspiration for his policy than do a number of his colleagues, e.g. *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 30 H. 448 (*veritate manifestata*), 56 H. 454 (*revelatione facta veritatis*), and esp. 28 H. 447 (*circa fratres . . . quibus veritas revelatur aut circa Deum . . . cuius inspiratione ecclesia eius instruitur*), and cf. *Ep.* 71 n. 13.

35. *inde surgat actus nostri ratio unde et ordo et origo surrexit.* One is strongly tempted to construe *ordo* as *ordo noster* = *ordo sacerdotalis/episcoporum*. However there appears to be no parallel example in Cyprian for *ordo* used in this sense of clerical station, though the word is commonly found with this significance in Tertullian (e.g. *De exhort. cast.* 7.2 CCL 2.1024 [*ordo sacerdotalis*]; *De praesc. haeret.* 32.1 and *Adv. Marc.* 4.5.2 CCL 1.212, 551 [*ordo episcoporum*]). I translate, therefore,

understanding a dependent *actus nostri* after *ordo*; hence *ordo et origo* become a simple variant for *praecepta et traditio*. Discussion of *ordo* in Cyprian in Watson 261; Koch, *Cyp. Unter.* 25; Janssen, *Kultur u. Sprache* 51; van Beneden, *Aux origines* 46 ff.; cf. Bayard, *Le latin* 180 f.; Vilela, *Condition collégiale* 268.

For the historical background to the elaborate analogy of the urban water-supply, see the study by H. Schwartz in *Excavations at Carthage* 1977 6 (1981) 50 ff.

36. Allusion to Eph. 4.4 ff., Fahey 485. There has been earlier allusion to this passage in §§2.2 and 3.1.

37. Cant. 4.12 f., 15, Fahey 170: see *Ep.* 69.2.1 and n. 9 ad loc.

38. 1 Pet. 3. 20 f., Fahey 522 f., exploited also in *Ep.* 69.2.2, where see n. 11. Doubtless Cyprian was not unaware of the sarcastic effect of quoting Peter when Stephen so prided himself on being Peter's successor, *Ep.* 75.18.1 f., cf. *Ep.* 75.6.2. Note the praise for biblical brevity and directness, a theme often expressed by Cyprian, e.g. *Ad Fort. praef.* 4 CCL 3.184; *De unit.* 15 CCL 3.260 (*compendio breviant*); *De dom. orat.* 27 f. CCL 3A.107; 9 CCL 3A.94 (*quam multa, quam magna breviter in sermone collecta*), and see Gallicet in *Forma futuri* 48 f.

39. Cyprian has chosen to open his conclusion with a clause that pointedly echoes the words of Stephen with which he began this letter (§1.2): *si qui . . . a quacumque haeresi venient ~ omnes qui ex quacumque haeresi convertuntur*.

LETTER 75

Contents: Despite the intervening distance, thanks to Cyprian's letter Cyprian and Firmilian have become spiritually united. And it is only right that men so at one in heart should be thus joined by the bonds of unity (§§1–3). Given the haste of the messenger, Firmilian will cursorily respond to what Cyprian has written so adequately already (§§4–5.1).

Stephen cannot be right in claiming apostolic tradition for his teaching: heretical sects came into existence only after the time of the apostles. Besides, Rome can be shown (as in its Easter observance)

not always to follow the original practice—and such divergences are no grounds for breaking peace, as Stephen has now done with Cyprian (§§5.2–6). Neither can it be right to approve the baptism of heretics. To take the Cataphrygians as an example: they do not possess the Holy Spirit, and therefore they cannot possess the Father or the Son either. Being outcasts from all holiness, they cannot have the power to baptize. Such was the decision reached long ago at the Council of Iconium (§7). If heretics do not possess the Holy Spirit (which Stephen concedes), then there can be no spiritual birth with them. The minister of baptism must himself possess the Holy Spirit if his invocation of the Trinity is to bring sanctification (§§8–9).

To illustrate: during a local persecution of Christians which occurred in their area after a series of earthquakes, a woman presented herself as a prophetess. She was, in fact, diabolically possessed and she managed to trick even some of the clergy, but an exorcist succeeded in revealing her evil spirit. This woman, the agent of a demon, celebrated the Eucharist and administered baptism with all the customary rituals. Does Stephen intend to approve of her baptism, however formally correct, being the work, in fact, of the devil (§§10–11)?

Moreover, baptism is a spiritual washing: there can be no spiritual washing without the Spirit. And baptism is a second birth; heresy, being no bride of Christ, cannot produce children of God (§§12–14). The Church is an enclosed garden, the ark of Noah: only those within can be saved (§15). To the Church alone was given (through Peter and the apostles) the power to forgive sins (§16).

And yet Stephen, who so prides himself on being the successor of Peter, the foundation rock of the Church, is prepared to claim that heresy can wash away sin, that it can generate sons of God, and that it can forgive sins. That is tantamount to joining in communion with heresy (§17). There is no point in appealing to the power of the Name of Christ invoked in baptism: that Name has power solely within the Church. Nor is there point in appealing to custom: truth must be preferred. The Africans can show that they rejected erroneous custom when they discovered the truth. And for their own part in Cappadocia, they have always combined custom and truth on this matter, ever since the time of Christ and the apostles; and the Council of Iconium confirmed that view (§§18–19).

As for heretics admitted into the Church in time past without

baptism, they are to be regarded in the same way as catechumens who died before baptism: they have won no small blessings for their faith. But if they are still alive, they must receive the Church's baptism. They must not be guilty of touching the body and blood of the Lord unworthily; the Church must not become polluted by contact with the uncleansed. It is wrong to cheat heretics of forgiveness of sin by telling them that they are already baptized (§§21–23).

In his blundering ignorance Stephen has stirred up quarrels in every quarter of the globe, imagining he has the power to excommunicate everyone, but in fact cutting himself off from the rest of the Church. For he has ruptured peace with Easterners and Southerners, denying hospitality, communion, and even an audience to episcopal envoys (§§24–25.2).

In summary: if heretics have baptism, then there is no distinction between us and heresy.

Date and circumstances: Firmilian declares he will go through and pass comments upon the *scripta* which Cyprian has sent over to him (§§4.1, 5.1, 13.1). On internal evidence he must have been sent a dossier which contained at least copies of *Ep.* 69 (see esp. §§10.5 f.), *Ep.* 73 (e.g. §§16.1 ff.), and above all *Ep.* 74 (or a version of it: see esp. §§5, 7); a composite letter, which picked up a selection of points made in those letters, is a possibility but not a necessary postulate. That puts the date of Firmilian's reply well into 256; and that computation squares with the 22 years since the death of Emperor Alexander Severus mentioned in §10.1 (where see n. 44). Moreover, he is writing with the messenger anxiously observing the fast approach of winter (§§5.1, 13.1). In the course of August 257 Stephen died and Cyprian was sentenced to exile; Firmilian ought, therefore, to be writing in the autumn of 256 (? about the beginning of October, thus allowing the messenger just time to get back to Carthage before the storms made the seas too perilous for passage; see nn. 17, 96 below). Internal comparison does not force one to believe that Firmilian also had before him a copy of the *Sententiae episcoporum LXXXVII*, drawn up at the beginning of September 256 (and the timetable is distinctly against it: see n. 96 below). As likely as not, the messenger Rogatianus was already off on his journey to Caesarea when the African bishops began to make their way to their Council meeting in Car-

thage. The background to that September meeting in Carthage gains sharper focus when we realize that Stephen had already so publicly “ruptured peace” with both African bishops (§§6.2, 25.1) and a significant bloc of Eastern bishops (§25.1): see nn. 91, 95, 96 below.

It is not necessary to believe that Firmilian had any other of Cyprian’s letters before him, but it is reasonable to suppose that some of the enclosures of *Epp.* 73 and 74 (notably Stephen’s nonextant letter, *Ep.* 74.1.1) were also attached: see nn. 27, 66, 76 below, and cf. n. 88 (on *Ep.* 70).

For discussion of the documents Firmilian had received from Cyprian, see e.g., Benson 373, 386 ff.; Ritschl, *De epistulis* 42, 44 ff. (at detailed length); Ernst, *ZfKT* 18 (1894) 209 ff., 20 (1896) 364 ff., and *Papst Stephan I* 33 f., 80 ff.; H. Koch, *Int. kirch. Zeit.* 14 (1924) 96 f. For a recent extensive analysis see M. Girardi, *Vet. christ.* 19 (1982) 37 ff. Details of the parallels with *Epp.* 69–74 are noted in the course of the commentary.

Cyprian, rebuffed in Rome, has turned to seek collaborative support elsewhere. He has written over to Firmilian in the East as one of the leading bishops in an area known to uphold clearly-established “anabaptist” traditions (Councils of Iconium and Synnada, Dionys. Alex. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.7.5). Further, Firmilian has been an active opponent of Novatian as well (Euseb. *H.E.* 6.46.3)—not an unrelated attitude—and very recently he has stood out staunchly in opposition to Stephen’s views on rebaptism (Dionys. Alex. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.3 ff.). A sympathetic hearing was to be expected from him. We have no suggestion of previous correspondence. It is possible that other leading bishops in the same area, and identified with the same views, such as Helenus of Tarsus, were approached as well. But of that we have no hint. (It is not necessary to presume some “Eastern” origins for the African Church to account for Cyprian’s initiative, contra Telfer, *Stud. patr.* 4 [1961] 517, cf. Bardy, *Irénikon* 14 [1937] 13.) Firmilian writes back the sort of letter Cyprian would delightfully welcome, offering appropriate comments on and providing confirmatory echoes of Cyprian’s own arguments—so much so that we get very little of Firmilian’s own thinking in the letter. And he dwells, as epistolary etiquette enjoined, not on his own rejection by Stephen but on the insults endured by his correspondents (§§6.2, 25.1, 25.4).

Ep. 75 is thus largely Cyprian *réchauffé*, his old arguments being

served up in digested or paraphrased form. It adds remarkably little to our understanding of the grounds of the controversy. What we do gain, however, is a better understanding of the human context of the quarrel, Firmilian upholding (as Cyprian) a tradition already established by episcopal Council (§§7.5, 19.4). And we are given novel addenda to points already made by Cyprian. One such is the fascinating *narratio* of the local prophetess who assumed clerical powers, gaining her (? millenarian) following in the aftermath of a local persecution (§§10 f.). Another is a notable example of conflicting claims to apostolic traditions, Firmilian advancing the title of Jerusalem to be a more faithful observer (than Rome) of primitive traditions in the matter of the paschal debate (§6.1, cf. §19.3). And we gain a much clearer view of the pretensions of Stephen for the centrality of the Roman see and its Petrine traditions (§§17, 24.2) and of his high-handedness in dealing with opposition (§25.1). But the novelty above all is in the abuse. We can see the passions the dispute aroused. Not only do we catch a glimpse of Stephen in vituperative flow against Cyprian (§25.4) but Firmilian's own flights of vilification only serve to remind us how relatively restrained Cyprian has been, even in *Ep.* 74. Among other things Stephen is accused of *inhumanitas* (§2.2), *audacia* and *insolentia* (§3.1), *stultitia* (§17.1), *imperitia* (§24.1); he is the cause of quarrels, dissensions, and discord (§§24.2 25.1); he is even likened to a traitorous Judas (§2.2); he is worse than the very Jews (§17.2); and he is charged with *res improbe gestae* (§3.1), even *mendacium* (§25.4). We can start to appreciate the charged atmosphere which eventuated in the spectacular breakdown in fraternal relations (§25.1).

Firmilian had already been bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia for a quarter century, since the early 230s (Euseb. *H.E.* 6.27), and was to remain active there until his death in 268 (Euseb. *H.E.* 7.30.5). According to Gregory of Nyssa, *Vit. Greg. Thaum.* MG 46.905C, Firmilian belonged to the Cappadocian aristocracy ("Eupatrids"). He had been closely acquainted with Origen; Origen sojourned with him at Caesarea for some time, perhaps on his return journey from Athens in the second half of the 230s, and Firmilian had in turn visited Origen in Palestine (Euseb. *H.E.* 6.27). They exchanged correspondence which was later published (Jerome *Ep.* 33.4: *Firmi(li)ani et Gregorii et diversorum ad eum epistularam libri II*; there are textual

uncertainties); one fragment from Origen to Firmilian surviving (see Nautin, *Origène* 173 ff.; idem, *Lettres et écrivains*, 234 ff., 250 [text]).

We see him in the early 250s urging Dionysius of Alexandria to attend the projected Council at Antioch, clearly enlisting support against Novatianist sympathisers (Euseb. *H.E.* 6.46.3 f., cf. 7.5.1). Soon after this exchange of letters with Cyprian, Caesarea fell victim to invasion, and in the next century Basil could remind Damasus how his predecessor Dionysius wrote from Rome to the people of Caesarea a letter of consolation, sending those who would ransom their captive brethren (Basil *Ep.* 70 MG 32.430). In the 260s, as a very senior bishop in the area, he presided at the first sessions of inquiry against Paul of Samosata (Euseb. *H.E.* 7.30.3 f.); he was on his way to the second round when he died at Tarsus (Oct. 28?) in 268, (Euseb. *H.E.* 7.30.5).

Of his writings we hear of *logoi* (Basil, *De Spiritu sancto* 29 MG 32.208) and Basil seems to refer to this letter (*Ep.* 75) in his *Ep.* 178.1 MG 32.668 (in company with Cyprian). No other works survive.

For studies on Firmilian see AA.SS Oct. 12 (1867), 470 ff. (B. Bossue); Benson 372 ff.; Ernst, *ZfKT* 18 (1894) 209 ff.; Harnack, *Geschichte* 1.407 ff.; d'Alès, *Théologie* 202 ff.; DHGE 17 (1971) *s.v.* "Firmilien" 249 ff. (P. Nautin).

There are ample grounds for believing that Firmilian's letter was first conceived in Greek: Benson gives a lengthy list of some of the most glaring examples of Hellenisms (381 f.); Hartel notes Greek calques in his *praef.* XL f.; Bayard in his app. crit. records one or two more (e.g. §25.4: *qui . . . conscius = hos syneidōs*) and a few are observed *en passant* in the notes (e.g. nn. 4, 32, 46). No one would quarrel that it has been translated into thoroughly "Cyprianic" Latin; if it were to be used as an effective weapon in North Africa, and elsewhere in the West, a Latin version was essential. Hence, presumably, the survival of this text, copied and circulated widely. But apart from other considerations, there are sufficient examples of non-Cyprianic *vocabulary* to make one wonder whether a draft translation had not been first prepared in Cyprian's secretariat and not all of these expressions, uncharacteristic of Cyprian's own pen, were eliminated from the text as finally approved. Such usages are *caritas* (n. 4), *salvator* (n. 8), *deificus* (n. 33), *dimissio* (n. 35), *synagoga* (n. 65), *catechizare* (n. 83), *succumbe* (n. 86), *communio* (n. 97). On Cyprian's knowledge of Greek

(we cannot prove more than a passing acquaintance) see *Ep.* 60 n. 11, 63 n. 14, 69 n. 60, 70 n. 9, and H. Koch *Ric. relig.* 5 (1929) 152 ff. That this letter may be some sort of (Donatist) forgery—a notion entertained in the 18th and 19th centuries—or may have significant interpolations, is sufficiently dealt with by, among others, Ernst in his articles cited above and von Soden, *Quellen und Forsch.* 12 (1909) 21 f.

1. *Firmilianus Cypriano fratri in Domino* s. Firmilian opens with a salutation uncharacteristic of Cyprian's pen. Cyprian's habit is not to add *in Domino*; his nearest examples come in letters to confessors and martyrs, the florid *Epp.* 6 and 10 (*in Deo [patre] perpetuam s.*), and the effusive greeting of *Ep.* 82 (which does end, after elaborate flourishes, with *in Domino salutem*), but compare the conciliar *Ep.* 67 and the non-Cyprianic *Epp.* 77, 78, 79. No doubt we have a translation of *en kyriō chairein*. For discussion Bastiaensen 14 f., 32; Lanham, *Salutatio formulas* 24 ff.

2. Rogatianus must be a *Carthaginian* deacon (*diaconum a vobis missum* here, *legatus iste a vobis missus* in §5.1). On clerics used as church messengers, *Epp.* 29 n. 4, 44 n. 13; and on the general functions of deacons, *Ep.* 3 n. 17.

3. The hardness of these opening commonplaces in polite correspondence (cf. *Epp.* 6 n. 6, 76 n. 4, and see further Koskenniemi, *Studien* 172 ff.) makes it difficult to discern whether Cyprian may have been in contact with Firmilian by letter at some earlier date. Firmilian certainly writes in §25.1 (*quod nec vos latere confidimus*) implying, at least, that he has not written recently to Cyprian, and §2.3 suggests the same conclusion. The initiative in this exchange of letters has been Cyprian's. There may be passing echoes here of 1 Cor. 5.3 (*ego quidem absens corpore praesens autem spiritu*: Vulgate) and of Ps. 67.7 (*Deus qui inhabitare facit unanimes in domo*: Cyprian's text).

4. The two biblical quotations are taken from Isa. 2.2 (cf. Fahey 190) and Ps. 132.1 (cf. Fahey 153) along with a clear allusion (the prayer of the Psalmist) to Ps. 26.4 (cf. Fahey 132 f.). The method of introducing the quotations (*ait, inquit*), without identifying location, is not in Cyprian's manner (Fahey 29), neither is the rewriting of the biblical text for the allusion (Fahey 51 f.). Likewise, Cyprian tends to avoid *sancti* (*apud sanctos*) in the sense of *fideles, iusti, fratres*, etc., and the use of *caritas* here, in the phrase *magnam voluntatis caritatem*,

savours distinctly of a Grecism; it is not a Cyprianic usage (there may be allusion to 2 Cor. 8.11: *hē prothymia tou thelein*).

5. Allusion to Luke 15.10 (not in Cyprian), with the significant addition of *ad unitatis vinculum revertente*. Firmilian is carefully preparing for the contrast about to be made with those who are *not* united with the angels and the saints (himself and Cyprian included) in harmonious charity.

6. *de angelis conversationem in caelis habentibus*. . . . On the word *conversatio* see *Ep.* 11 n. 48, adding Watson 278 f. on Cyprian's own usage. There appears to be an echo here of Phil. 3.20, where Cyprian's text read *nostra autem conversatio in caelis est* (cf. Fahey 497 f.).

7. *nec confabulatio iam possit esse aut sermo communis*. This may seem a lame clause to add after the charge of not praying together (the hallmark of disunity), but in fact Firmilian is artfully preparing for his most forthright attack on Stephen's *inhumanitas*, strategically held in reserve until his final chapter: Stephen has ruptured peace with bishops and even denied Christian hospitality to their envoys, actually refusing them any audience: *nec ad sermonem saltem colloquii communis admitteret* (§25.1).

8. *neque . . . Iudas . . . prodicione quae scelerate circa salvatorem operatus est dignus videri potest*. On the Christian neologism *salvator* (eschewed by Cyprian himself) see *Ep.* 21 n. 3; another hard-hitting analogy between Judas and the opponent of "rebaptism" is drawn in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*. 61 H. 455: *qui haereticis ecclesiae baptismum . . . prodit, quid aliud quam sponsae Christi Iudas exitit?*

9. *secundum regulam veritatis et sapientiam Christi*. Cf. *ad regulam veritatis et pacis* §24.3, *ab ecclesiastica regula* §10.5. It is fair to suspect that *regula* translates *kanōn* and is being used to refer broadly to the deposit of faith rather than more specifically to scriptural precept. Discussion in Hanson, *Tradition* 75 ff., and further analysis in Oppel 73 ff.; Flesseman-van Leer, esp. 161 ff.; Häggglund, *Stud. theol.* 12 (1958) 4 ff.

10. Allusion to Ps. 18.5 (a passage not exploited by Cyprian). For the linking, which precedes, of Job, Noah, Daniel—and Ezekiel—compare Ezek. 14.14, 14.20.

11. Ps. 72.27 (again, not used by Cyprian) followed by John 17.21 (cf. Fahey 400). In these opening sections Firmilian has given at least eight biblical quotations or allusions, three of which never

occur in Cyprian and the remaining five do not appear in the corpus of Cyprian's baptismal documents. But Firmilian is now about to turn to Cyprian's baptismal letters; and by contrast the biblical references hereafter have almost all been exploited already by Cyprian during the baptismal dispute. (Exceptions generally occur at points where Firmilian turns away from Cyprian's text: see nn. 26, 31, 64, 85 ff. below.) Firmilian is going to give very much a running commentary on Cyprian's own texts (cf. his own remarks in §13.1). Consult further Girardi, *Vet. christ.* 19 (1982) 37 ff., for a lengthy analysis of the 60 N.T. attestations (15 citations and 45 allusions) and 28 O.T. attestations (12 citations and 16 allusions) which he purports to detect in this letter.

12. On the *scripta* which Firmilian had so cherished, see intro. to this letter (*Epp.* 69, 73, and 74, along with some of their enclosures?).

13. Firmilian is returning to Cyprian a biblical allusion he had cast against his opponents (1 Cor. 14.30 in *Ep.* 74.10.2 and *Ep.* 71.3.2).

14. *necessario apud nos fit ut per singulos annos seniores et praepositi in unum conveniamus*. An interesting observation: annual meetings are now seen as a regular and necessary feature of church life—though Firmilian leaves it unclear whether the meetings he has in mind are local synods or interprovincial Councils. Our evidence suggests the former, with wider Eastern Councils convened at irregular intervals for major issues (cf. n. 34 below on Iconium; on the recent Council of Antioch [?252] see Introduction to ACW 44, pp. 12 f.; Paul of Samosata is soon to occasion further such Councils). Discussion in Heffele-Leclercq, *Histoire* 1.1.159 ff.

The precise interpretation of *seniores* and *praepositi* has occasioned debate. As presbyters regularly were in attendance at Council meetings along with their bishops (cf. *Epp.* 1 n. 3, 59 n. 76), it is reasonable to see here a reference to the two senior clerical orders, to both *presbyteri* (= *seniores*, church elders) and *episcopi* (= *praepositi*: a regular Cyprianic equivalent, cf. *Ep.* 3 n. 16). Cyprian was himself well aware that *presbyteri* meant "elders" (see *Ep.* 43 n. 21) and his African biblical text used the word *senior* in Levit. 19.32, interpreted as a senior cleric in *Test.* 3.85 CCL 3.164. Others suggest that, as in §7.4 *maiores natu* clearly refer in the context to bishops, so *seniores* here may

very well be but a variant translation: in that case not two distinct clerical orders are involved and *et* here would be appositional, as in *Ep.* 3.3.1: *episcopos et praepositos*. For discussion Turner, *Studies* 29; Vilela, *Condition collégiale* 221 ff. Was the translator doubtful about the precise sense in which *presbyteroi* was used in the Greek original—bishops, or presbyters, or both (cf. n. 32 below)? *Seniores* side-stepped the difficulty.

15. *lapis quoque fratribus et post lavacrum . . . vulneratis per poenitentiam medella quaeratur*. Firmilian chooses to illustrate the work of their Councils as being disciplinary in character and concerned primarily with penitential discipline at that. While other councils were often of this nature (cf. Elvira), one cannot help surmising that this choice of illustration reflects recent traumatic experience, in the aftermath of the Decian persecution. Compare the remarks in §§22.1 f. on the sin of involuntary apostasy during persecution (versus heresy) and in §10.1 on a local (versus world-wide) persecution: they are indicators of a similar preoccupation.

16. *non quasi a nobis remissionem peccatorum consequatur*. The playing-down of the Church's sacramental gift of the keys is not exceptional: that Christ is the ultimate arbiter in penance and forgiveness has already been emphasized by members of the Roman Church (e.g. *Ep.* 30.8, where see n. 50; *Ep.* 49.2.5, where see n. 19; *Ep.* 53, where see n. 2) as well as of the Carthaginian Church (*Ep.* 55.18.1, where see n. 81; cf. *Ep.* 55.19.2). Cyprian, likewise, constantly stresses the importance of the Church's penitential *disciplina* in inducing compunction and the performance of compensatory *opera* (e.g. *Ep.* 4.3.3 ff., with nn. 31 ff. ad loc.).

17. *quoniam vero legatus . . . regredi ad vos festinabat et hibernum tempus urgebat*. One has to remember that this is a hackneyed *topos* of letter writing, haste of composition excusing the absence of stylistic polish and elaboration (cf. §13.1, and for literature on this convention see *Ep.* 49 n. 21). Nevertheless, we have an important dating-indicator: convention or not, Firmilian has to be writing in the later months of the year. Ordinary shipping normally (but by no means always) shut down in early November (Veget. *De re milit.* 4.39). Therefore, for Rogatianus to be able to make his way down to the coast from Caesarea in Cappadocia (about 350 km by the most direct route to the nearest port) and there to catch shipping which would

land him eventually in Carthage by early November (he might have to allow time for changing boats at, say, Corinth and Syracuse on the voyage), we ought to surmise that Firmilian is writing, at the very latest, towards the end of September. Such would be the normal timetable, but urgent affairs could entail exceptional risks. The length of Firmilian's reply (despite his conventional protestations in §13.1) does not, however, suggest excessive haste. It is fair to conclude, in turn, that Cyprian must have despatched Rogatianus to Caesarea *before* the Council met on September 1, 256. See further intro. to this letter and n. 96 below (P. Nautin in DHGE 17 [1971] s.v. "Firmilien" 250 claims that Rogatianus went straight from Caesarea to Alexandria—and there enlisted the support of Dionysius of Alexandria—before returning to Carthage. That is entirely conjectural. Cf. idem, *Lettres et écrivains* 155 f.). For data on length of voyages and the closed shipping season, see the literature cited in intro. to *Ep.* 37, esp. Rougé, *Recherches* 32 ff., 101 ff., adding, on this particular voyage, Ernst, *Papst Stephan I.* 73 ff., and Friedländer, *Sittengeschichte Roms*¹⁰ 1.337 ff. (both computing an unrealistically tight timetable). In the next century Basil has occasion to complain of the shutdown in communications to Caesarea in Cappadocia during the winter months: see the passages assembled by Courtonne, *Un témoin* 16 ff.; Fox, *Life and Times* 1 ff.

18. *quantum potuimus ad scripta vestra rescripsimus*. Carey, in trans. ad loc., interprets this as an apology from Firmilian for writing "individually, instead of sending a Synodical letter on the following Easter," but Firmilian is merely voicing a standard deprecation for the inadequacies of his hasty response (see previous n.).

19. *Stephanus dixit, quasi apostoli eos qui ab haeresi veniunt baptizari prohibuerint*. . . . Firmilian appears to be paraphrasing the argument Cyprian ascribed to Stephen, by implication, in *Ep.* 74.2: cf. §6.2 below and *Ep.* 73 n. 36 for this appeal to apostolic tradition.

20. So argued by Cyprian in *Epp.* 74.2.3 ff.

21. Note the stress on the pedigree: Apelles came after Marcion, and Marcion himself was a disciple of Cerdon (whose *floruit* was c. 140). See *Ep.* 74 nn. 11 and 12 (on Marcion and Cerdon), *Ep.* 73 n. 14 (on Marcion and Apelles). Apelles, as a descendant from Marcion, is Firmilian's own addition.

22. *sed et Valentini et Basilidis tempus manifestum est*. This is another corroborative gloss offered by Firmilian on Cyprian's text. Valentinus had occurred in *Ep.* 74.7.3 (where see n. 25), Valentinians in *Ep.* 73.4.2. (where see n. 14). Basilides, an older Alexandrian contemporary of Valentinus, has not, however, appeared hitherto: his *floruit* can be placed in the second quarter of the second century (principates of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius). He appears as a predecessor of Valentinus in Gnosticism in Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 1.24.3 f. (SC 264.324 ff.) and cf. Hippol. *Ref.* 7.20 ff. (GCS Hippol. 3.195 ff.). He claimed doctrinal descent from Matthias. For a succinct general account, RAC 1 (1950) *s.v.* "Basilides" 1217 ff. (Waszink).

23. Firmilian alludes to Tit. 3.11, a passage exploited by Cyprian in the parallel argument in *Ep.* 74.2.3 (and cf. *Epp.* 73.10.3, 69.4.2).

24. *apud illos aliquas diversitates nec observari illic omnia aequaliter quae Hierosolymis observantur*. Firmilian in memorable fashion concludes his attack on the value of the Roman claims to have apostolic pedigree for their prescription, a prescription, moreover, conceived by Stephen as being *universal* (*apostoli . . . hoc custodiendum posteris tradiderint*, §5.1). In order to concentrate his attack, he skilfully chooses Jerusalem as a rival locus of apostolic tradition, Jerusalem being in many ways the primitive centre of Christianity and already figuring in appeals to pristine Christianity (e.g. Melito of Sardis *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 4.26.14 had journeyed "to the place where these things were proclaimed and done" in order to get an accurate list of the books of the O.T.; thus, too, the evil spirit in §10.3 below is at pains to claim Jerusalem as his origin; and Firmilian himself had spent some time with Origen in the Holy Land, Euseb. *H.E.* 6.27, and he had gone on pilgrimage there to see the Holy Places, Jerome *De viris illust.* 54 ML 23.699 [*sub occasione sanctorum locorum Palaestinam veniens*]). And upon Jerusalem Firmilian tellingly centres the Easter controversy (*circa celebrandos dies Paschae*; note the synod there on the issue in the late second century, Euseb. *H.E.* 5.23.3, 25)—although Corinth, Ephesus, Hierapolis, Antioch, Smyrna, Sardis, Alexandria, and other cities had in fact also figured prominently in the complex dispute. Observe that Firmilian here uses, no doubt because of its special religious resonances, the biblical name of *Hierosolyma* (Jerusalem)

rather than the official name of *Aelia* (*Capitolina*) current since the days of Hadrian and freely used by contemporary church writers (e.g. Dionys. Alex. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.1).

Easter was the great feast of Christian unity but, scandalously, there had been open disagreement and conflict over the computation of the date for its celebration ever since the mid-second century (Polycrates and Anicetus, Irenaeus *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.24.16 f.): the Quartodecimans of the East could be joyously solemnizing the day of the resurrection while the Roman Church might still be deep in penitential mourning. Put very crudely, was Easter, the Christian Passover, to be celebrated, following Jewish practice, on the 14th day of the month Nisan, whatever the day of the week (the Asiatic observation), or, was it to be observed, as elsewhere, on the Sunday following? And Firmilian has adroitly chosen for illustration an issue in which a Roman bishop had notoriously tried, in vain, to impose his (apostolic) practice upon others (Victor: see Euseb. *H.E.* 5.24.9 ff.). (From the run of the argument Firmilian seems to be alluding not so much to differences in observance to be found *within* the Roman Church itself—though, given Rome’s cosmopolitan population, they are likely enough—as differences in Roman practice from those of sister churches.)

There is literature in abundance on the paschal conflict, e.g. DACL 13 (1938) *s.v.* “Pâques” 1521 ff. (H. Leclercq); Huber, *Passa und Ostern*; Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday* 198 ff.; Strobel, *Ursprung und Geschichte*; Cantalamessa, *La pâque* (1980, with further bibliography xxxiii ff.); and among recent articles there are Richard, *L’orient syrien* 6 (1961) 179 ff.; Mohrmann, VC 16 (1962) 154 ff.; Cadman, *Stud. patr.* 5 (1962) 8 ff.; Brox, ZfKG 83 (1972) 291 ff., esp. 314 ff. (on this passage); Richardson, JTS 24 (1973) 74 ff.; von Carnpenhausen, VC 28 (1974) 114 ff.

25. *rumpens adversus vos pacem*: see further on this rupture of “peace” between Rome and Carthage, §§24.2 ff. below and *Ep.* 74 n. 29. Firmilian is much more specific and direct than Cyprian is in his passing and general remark of *Ep.* 74.8.2 (*sacerdotes Dei . . . abstinendos putat*).

26. *Petrum et Paulum . . . qui in epistolis suis haereticos execrati sunt*. Cyprian has made a similar point that the apostles in their epistles execrated heretics in *Epp.* 69.1.3, 73.15.1, 74.2.3, 74.3.2, but there

he has cited in evidence the epistles of John (1 John 2.18 f., 4.3) and of Paul (2 Tim. 2.17, 2 Cor. 6.14, and esp. Tit. 3.10 f. [cf. n. 23 above]). Firmilian has now introduced *Peter* in order to confront the claims of Stephen as the self-styled champion of the traditions of the church of Peter and Paul. Presumably there is allusion to 2 Peter 2.1 ff., 3.17, an epistle which Cyprian himself, like Tertullian, does not cite, the second epistle enjoying in the early Church but dubious canonicity: Eusebius *H.E.* 3.3.1, 6.25.8 (Origen), and for a brief study, Hanson, *Tradition* 223 f.; also Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude* 223 ff. (None of the citations given in *Biblia patristica* 1.531 for Tertullian's use of 2 Peter is probant.)

27. *dixit haereticos quoque ipsos in baptismo convenire et quod alterutrum ad se venientes non baptizent, sed communicent tantum.* It is unclear whether the first clause (*haereticos . . . convenire*) gives us a further statement made by Stephen himself or is merely Firmilian's gloss on the quotation which follows (*alterutrum . . . tantum*) as cited in *Ep.* 74.1.2. As *Ep.* 74 had a copy of Stephen's letter attached (*Ep.* 74.1.1), so the version sent to Firmilian was presumably likewise equipped (see nn. 66, 76 below and *Ep.* 74 intro. for other possible traces of Stephen's text). For commentary on Stephen's claim see *Ep.* 74 n. 7.

28. *sic consentire in baptismi sui vanitate.* *Vanitas* is presumably used in the sense of "futility," "worthlessness," "emptiness," but a translation has to cope with the contrasting *divinitatis veritate* which follows.

29. *illi qui Cataphrygas appellantur.* In *Ep.* 73.5.1 Cyprian had taken Marcionites for his sample heresy (thereby enabling him, at the same time, to meet claims advanced in the letter forwarded by Iubaianus, *Ep.* 73.4.1). Firmilian now adds, in corroboration, as his specimen heresy, Cataphrygians, i.e. Montanists, a movement that had gone unmentioned in Cyprian's catalogues of heresies in *Epp.* 74.7.3, 73.4.2 (where see n. 14). This enables Firmilian, in turn, to cite apoposely the findings of the Council of (Phrygian) Iconium (§7.4), occasioned by dispute over the validity of heretical (Montanist) baptism (§19.4).

30. *nec patrem possunt habere nec filium quia nec spiritum sanctum.* The text of the last four words is uncertain but the sense is recoverable: spirit they may have possessed but not the *holy* Spirit. Firmilian is rephrasing an argument of Cyprian's (e.g. *Ep.* 73.12, 17.1 f., 18.2

f.) that all three persons of the Trinity are possessed together: error regarding any one member of the Trinity necessitates error regarding the other members. If, Cyprian had argued, you have the wrong Father (qua Marcionite), you cannot possess the true Son or Spirit either. Likewise, Firmilian is now arguing, if you possess false spirit (qua Montanist), you cannot have the true Father or Son either. Hence, in §19.4, the anxiety of some over the legitimacy of Montanists, who appeared *not* to be in error over Father and Son.

31. *spiritum per Montanum et Priscam locutum*. Montanus led from Phrygia in the second half of the second century (precise dating notoriously disputed) a pentecostal movement which spread rapidly throughout the Eastern and Western churches; it was noted for religious enthusiasm and ecstatic prophesying, along with apocalyptic expectations of the advent of the New Jerusalem. This millenarian movement (soon acquiring significant local variations) was only with difficulty and after much noisy dispute (and not universally) discerned as unorthodox. Montanus himself manifested the outpourings of the Spirit by giving utterance to inspired "oracles."

Scandalously, Montanus was joined by two prophetesses, Prisc[ill]a and Maximilla, who, like Montanus, claimed to be mouthpieces of the Paraclete (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.14.1, 5.16.9, 5.17.4, 5.18.3). Hence there are Montanist "oracles" ascribed to the prophetic voice of Prisc[ill]a herself (e.g. Tert. *De res. mort.* 11.2 CCL 2.932, *De exhort. cast.* 10.5 CCL 2.1030, Epiph. *Adv. haer.* 49.1.2 f. GCS Epiphan. 2.242). A vain attempt was made in Thrace to exorcize Priscilla's spirit (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.19.3). In our received accounts Maximilla in fact plays a more prominent role than Prisc[ill]a, but both are described as "chattering crazily, inopportunistly, and wildly, like Montanus" (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.16.9).

Significantly for this present passage, it was on the basis of Montanist utterances (the "New Prophecies") that the movement came to be condemned (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 5.16.10: Asiatic synods).

The works of de Labriolle are still primary, *Les sources* and *La crise montaniste*, to which add e.g. Barnes, JTS 21 (1970) 403 ff. (on chronology), and idem, *Tertullian* 130 ff. (on Montanism in Africa); Tabbernee, *Opposition to Montanism*; Gibson, *The "Christians for Christians" Inscriptions* 125 ff.; Aland, *Kirchengeschichtliche Entwürfe* 105 ff., Aune, *Prophecy*, 313 ff.

Firmilian proceeds to allude to 1 John 4.6 (on discerning the spirit of truth and the spirit of error), a passage nowhere exploited by Cyprian.

32. *in ecclesia . . . ubi praesident maiores natu . . .*: the choice of verb (*praesideo*—see *Ep.* 69 n. 13) and the functions described (the bishop e.g. being the ordinary minister for baptism and for the laying-on of hands, *Ep.* 73 n. 24) put it beyond doubt that *maiores natu* are to be interpreted as bishops (cf. n. 14 above). The *maiores natu* are also described as possessing *ordinandi . . . potestatem*: on the nuances of *ordinare* here see van Beneden, *Aux origines* 89 f. Presumably *maiores natu* translates a Greek original *presbyteroi* (used legitimately in the sense of “church rulers”) but is so translated into Latin to avoid the suggestion that presbyters enjoyed *ordinandi . . . potestatem*. See Turner, *Studies* 29; Janssen, 79 ff.; Benson 330; and Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon* s.v. *πρεσβύτερος* §5, who cites this passage as an example of the long survival of inexact terminology by which *presbyteros* = *ruler in a church* (with parallels). Note, too, *Test.* 3.76 CCL 3.161 (*maiolem natu non temere accusandum*), where Cyprian’s text of 1 Tim. 5.19 reads *maiolem natu* (Vulgate: *presbyterum*).

33. *alienus sit a spiritali et deifica sanctitate*. *Deificus* is very rarely used by Cyprian himself (see Watson 244 f. n. 1; Bayard, *Latin* 44 n. 1) but it does appear also in *Ep.* 22.1.2. (Lucianus) and *Sent. episc.* LXXXVII. 8 H. 441 (Crescens a Cirta), cf. *De aleat.* 11 H. 3. 103: *studio deifico obsequere*.

34. *nos iam pridem in Iconio . . . confirmavimus*. The date of this Council is discussed, with bibliography, in *Ep.* 70 n. 4 (during the 230s?); §19.4 shows that the general debate had been raised by doubts over the validity of *Montanist* baptism. Were there converts coming in from Montanist sects seeking to enter the Catholic fold? Firmilian would appear to have been present himself. The choice of verb (*confirmavimus*) is pointed: §§19.3 f. declare that they merely *confirmed* a view they had held *ab initio*, from the very time of Christ and the apostles.

The bishops of the area stuck to their decision; hence Stephen wrote “about Helenus [of Tarsus] and Firmilian and all those from Cilicia and Cappadocia and, indeed, Galatia and all the neighbouring peoples, that he would not hold communion with them either for this same reason, since, he says, they rebaptize heretics” (Diony. Alex.

ap. Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.4). We can reasonably conclude that the bishops have not recently reconvened to reconfirm this stand of theirs; such a relevant meeting goes unmentioned by Firmilian.

Augustine unwisely and unhistorically maintained that Cyprian's views on (re)baptism were *adversus totius orbis morem*, *De bapt.* 4.6.8 CSEL 51.231—though Augustine does refer indirectly to *Ep.* 75 in *De unico bapt.* 14.23 CSEL 53.23: *Stephanus . . . excommunicandos esse censeret, sicut et aliorum episcoporum et ipsius Cypriani litterae ostendunt*, and in *Contra Cresconium* 3.1.2 CSEL 52.410: *quidquid de Cypriani venerabilis martyris et de quorundam orientalium litteris inserendum putasti . . .*; and in *ibid.* 3.3 CSEL 52.412 he can ask, more accurately, why prefer the view of 50 Oriental bishops and 70 or so African bishops *contra tot milia episcoporum quibus hic error in toto orbe displicuit*.

35. *dimissionem peccatorum et secundam nativitatem in haereticorum baptismum posse procedere*. Hartel relies on only weak MS support for including the words *in haereticorum baptismum*. Note the use of *dimissio* (*peccatorum*) instead of the Cyprianic *remissio/remissa*, as elsewhere in this letter and cf. Watson 249 and d'Alès, *Théologie de s. Cyprien* 233 f.

36. *apud quos etiam ipsi confitentur spiritum sanctum non esse*. For this claim see *Ep.* 74.5.4, but it was also made earlier in *Ep.* 69.10.2 (cf. *Ep.* 73.6.2). Hence the view is ascribed both to Stephen and to those who agree with him (*qui illi consentiunt*). One suspects that Cyprian (and Firmilian) have conveniently lumped together *all* their opponents, however variable the nuances of their particular viewpoints.

37. This is the argument of *Ep.* 73.24.3 (where see n. 57) but not that of *Ep.* 69.11.2 (where stronger powers were attributed to John: see n. 36 ad loc.). And on the *verbal* level of argument (*spiritalis*~*Spiritus*) compare *Ep.* 74.5.4 (with n. 19).

38. *post illicitam et profanam eorum tinctionem*. The translation of *Ep.* 75 adheres to Cyprian's linguistic habit of reserving *tinctio/tinguo* for profane or heretical washing (cf. §13.2 *tinguntur*, §22.1 *tincti*): see *Ep.* 70 n. 15 (and cf. *Epp.* 72 n. 6, 73 n. 17).

39. *invocata trinitate*. On some readings of *Epp.* 73.4 1, 14.3, 16.1 ff., 74.5.1 it has been deduced that Cyprian was dealing with baptism administered in the Name of Jesus only. Firmilian clearly has not drawn that deduction himself (but see also §§18.1 f. below).

For commentary see *Ep.* 73 n. 18 (also nn. 13 and 38), and for the ceremony that might be involved in such a Trinitarian “invocation” (triple interrogation accompanied by triple immersion?) cf. Tert. *Adv. Prax.* 26.9 CCL 2.1198: *nec semel sed ter ad singula nomina in personas singulas tinguimur*, and for further discussion see Evans’ n. 10 on Tert. *De bapt.* 6 and *Ep.* 69 n. 27.

40. That is, 1 Cor. 2.6 (a passage not cited by Cyprian).

41. *quando et qui baptizat habet spiritum sanctum et baptisma quoque ipsum non sit sine spiritu constitutum*. In the first clause Firmilian shows he shares Cyprian’s sacramental view that the minister of baptism must himself be possessed of the Spirit (e.g. *Ep.* 69.10.2 ff.); in the second clause can he be referring not so much to the exclusive establishment of legitimate baptism within the (true) Church (*baptisma* = power to baptize) as to the necessary sanctification of the baptismal waters for effective baptism (*baptisma* = water of baptism), e.g. *Ep.* 70.1.3 (where see n. 6), *Ep.* 74.5.4 (where see n. 20)? And see further on these attitudes *Ep.* 69 intro.

42. *dicunt . . . mente et fide sua baptismi gratiam consequi posse*. This is the argument of *Ep.* 73.4 ff. (cf. *Ep.* 69.7 f.).

43. Firmilian is using texts quoted together in *Ep.* 73.16.1, viz. Matt. 7.21 (allusion) and 24.5 (quotation).

44. *ante viginti enim et duos fere annos temporibus post Alexandrum imperatorem*. Firmilian firmly assigns the events to be described as occurring after the time of Emperor Alexander Severus (d. in the early months of 235). By inclusive counting, some 22 years later gets us down into 256, in the autumn of which Firmilian is now writing. To establish the veracity of his story, he is elaborately fixing the occurrence to the course of the year 235, giving authenticating dates and validating name (Serenianus was the governor). Observe that Firmilian omits to assign the persecution, which he is about to describe, to the Emperor Maximinus Thrax: he appears to know no tradition of Maximinus Thrax as a general persecutor of Christians (contra Euseb. *H.E.* 6.28). For further discussion see my article in *Historia* 15 (1966) 445 ff.; Keresztes, *Latomus* 28 (1969) 601 ff.; Lippold, *Historia* 24 (1975) 479 ff.; Nautin, *Origène* 72 ff.; Meloni, *La Sardegna romana* 352 ff., 443; and on the dating Barnes, *Tertullian* 269 f.

Firmilian introduces his narrative with the opening clause: *volo autem vobis et de historia quae apud nos facta est exponere*. Press, *Develop-*

ment of the Idea of History 107, would interpret *de historia* as meaning "from the past"; I very much doubt that *de historia quae . . . facta est . . . ad hoc ipsum pertinente* can be legitimately construed in this way.

45. *terrae enim motus plurimi et frequentes extiterunt . . . ut ex hoc persecutio quoque gravis adversum nos nominis fieret*. The attack on Christians is linked to pagan reaction after severe local earthquakes (hence the restoration activities in Cappadocia as evidenced by CIL 3.6913, 6934, 6936, 6953?). For Christians (as often) popularly blamed for natural disasters, cf. Origen *Contra Cels.* 3.15 SC 136.40; Tert. *Apol.* 40.1 f. CCL 1.153; Cyp. *Ad Demet.* 2 ff. CCL 3A.35 ff.; Arnob. 1.1 ff. CSEL 4.3 ff.; Just. *1 Apol.* 70 MG 6.434 f.; *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 9.7.8 ff.; Aug. *De civit. Dei* 1.36, 2.3, 3.31 CSEL 40.58, 62, 159 ff. Christians were quick to retaliate, attributing evil times to retribution for pagan persecution of Christians, e.g. Tert. *Ad Scap.* 3.1 ff. CCL 2.1129.

Origen in his commentary on Matt. 24.7 (GCS Origen 11.75, *comm. ser.* 39) has this personal observation to make on the signs for the coming end of the world: "We have personal knowledge (*scimus autem et apud nos*) of an earthquake and destruction that occurred in certain areas. As a result, heathens without the faith claimed Christians were to blame for the earthquake—hence churches suffered persecution and were burnt—and even men who were considered wise similarly claimed publicly that severe earthquakes occur because of the Christians." It is perfectly feasible that Origen, the guest of Firmilian in Cappadocia, is referring to these same events (hence we have the added detail of the burning of churches): further discussed in *Historia* 15 (1966) 450 f.

46. *post longam retro aetatis pacem repente oborta . . . terribilior effecta est*. This passage provides useful confirmation of the impression we receive from our sources of the highly sporadic, unsystematic, and basically local character of persecution in the early Church (up to the period of Decius). Cyprian can also blame, as Firmilian does here, *pax longa* for the devastation occasioned by the unexpected outbreak of persecution, *De laps.* 5 CCL 3.223 (in Carthage; principate of Decius). So far as I know, the last evidence we chance to have of earlier persecution in Cappadocia itself occurs in Tert. *Ad Scap.* 3.4 CCL 2.1129: *Claudius Lucius Herminianus in Cappadocia . . . Christianos crudeliter tractasset*, the context suggesting a date in the late second

century (cf. PIR² C888; Barbieri, *L'albo*, no. 157 and p. 425). Firmilian is talking of an interlude of peace that had lasted up to half a century. For a brief sketch of early Christianity in Cappadocia see R. Teja, ANRW 2.7.2 (1980) 1120 ff. The adjectival use of *retro* in *longam retro . . . pacem* smacks of a Hellenism (retained from the original Greek?). See Bayard, *Latin* 277.

47. *Serenianus tunc fuit in nostra provincia praeses, acerbus et dirus persecutor*. This persecution was not merely unofficial mob lynching and looting: the governor himself was involved. CIL 3.6932, 6945, 12195 record dedications made by (Licinnius) Serenianus to Emperor Maximinus Thrax, while Serenianus was governor (*Leg. Aug. pro praetore*) of Cappadocia, thus confirming Firmilian's testimony. Serenianus appears to have been of Spanish origins. See, for fuller evidence, PIR² L 245; Barbieri, *L'albo*, no. 1632; Townsend, *Class. Phil.* 50 (1955) 41 f.; Dietz, *Senatus contra principem* 177 (no. 48).

48. *persecutio illa non per totum mundum sed localis fuisset*. Firmilian is contrasting this persecution with another which was in fact worldwide: he is thinking of the recent persecution of Decius (cf. n. 15 above, and see *Ep.* 19.2.1, with n. 10 and ACW 43.26 ff., on the universal nature of the Decian persecution). The refugee movements, set in train by persecution, are also noteworthy: compare similar evidence for flight before persecution in the time of Decius, detailed in ACW 43.43 f.

49. *nequam spiritus praesciens . . . id se facturum esse simularet quod futurum videret*. For this (standard) Christian explanation for demonic powers of (successful) prophecy, see Tert. *Apol.* 22.8 ff. CCL 1.129 f.; Min. Fel. *Oct.* 26.8 ff. (and for commentary ACW 39.311 ff.).

50. *diceret etiam se in Iudaeam et Hierosolymam festinare fingens tamquam inde venisset*. On the value of establishing a pedigree derived from (apostolic) Jerusalem, cf. n. 24 above. The choice of verb *festinare* is suggestive of some urgent, millenarian expectation (persecution having been construed, as so often, as a sign of the advent of Antichrist?—at least F. seems so to structure his narrative as to make the appearance of this movement a natural consequence of the experience of persecution). In fact, Judean Jerusalem (not Phrygian Pepuza) does figure as the site of the New Jerusalem in some early accounts of Montanism (cf. Tert. *Adv. Marc.* 3.24.2 ff. CCL 1.524, and see Powell, VC 29 [1975] 44 ff.; Tabbernee, *Opposition to Mon-*

tanism 117 ff.). Some, therefore, claim this prophetess to have been some variety of Montanist: see de Labriolle, *Crise montaniste* 483 ff.; Aland, *Kirchengeschichtliche Entwürfe* 116 ff.; and cf. E. Gibson, GRBS 16 (1975) 437 f. on the (?Montanist) epitaph of a female presbyter (at or near Uşak in Phrygia), and the epitaph of a Christian Phrygian prophetess who “had angelic visions and the gift of hearing voices in the highest degree,” Haspels, *Highlands of Phrygia* 1.338 f. (inscription 107, lines 10 f.).

Firmilian leaves it quite ambiguous (one supposes deliberately) whether the woman or the demon is the subject of the verb.

51. *unum de presbyteris Rusticum . . . fefellit*. Editors are in two minds whether *Rusticum* is a proper name (as Hartel takes it to be) or a descriptive adjective. As the accompanying deacon goes without his personal name, I have assumed the presbyter does likewise and that the epithet is provided to explain the presbyter’s gullibility. Compare Cornelius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.43.8 on the three “rustic and very simple-minded bishops” duped into consecrating Novatian, and Rufinus *H.E.* 2.10 ML 21.521 on the *quidam satis imperitus et agrestis episcopus* inveigled by Ursinus to consecrate him bishop after Damasus’ election.

52. *unus de exorcistis*. This happens to record our earliest testimony (date: 235) for exorcists classed as a separate *ordo*. For commentary see *Ep.* 23 n. 6.

53. Firmilian is at pains to provide the exorcist with peerless credentials (*vir probatus et circa religiosam disciplinam bene semper conversatus*) as well as the purest of motivations (succumbing to the importunities of men of probity and faith, *ipsi fortes ac laudabiles in fide*).

54. *praedixit venturum quendam aversum*. Firmilian exploits a classical theme as old as Homer (*Il.* 2.858 f.): the seer can foresee and foretell doom but is nevertheless powerless to avert his own. And compare the attempts (unsuccessful) to exorcize Montanus’ prophetesses, both Maximilla (Euseb. *H.E.* 5.16.16 f., 5.18.13) and Priscilla (*ibid.* 5.19.3).

55. *invocatione non contemptibili sanctificare se panem et eucharistiam facere simularet*. The words *invocatione non contemptibili* would seem to imply that personal variation was acceptable in the phrasing of the anaphora (but it does not mean that a standard formula was not also

available). For evidence of such improvisation cf. Just. *I Apol.* 67 MG 6.430 ("the one who presides likewise offers up prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his ability"; Hippol. *Trad. apost.* 9 SC 11.64 ("Let the bishop give thanks in the way we have formulated above. But it is by no means necessary for him to recite the very same words which we gave above, as though he had to endeavour to say them by heart in making his thanksgiving to God. But let each one pray according to his own ability. If, indeed, he is able to pray suitably with an elevated prayer, it is well. If, on the other hand, he produces a modest prayer [or "a prayer according to a fixed form" (*in mensura*)], you should not prevent him provided that his prayer is correct and orthodox"); and for further discussion see Hanson, VC 15 (1961) 173 ff. and Atchley, *On the Epiclesis of the Eucharistic Liturgy* 48 (on this passage).

The verbal expressions *sanctificare panem et eucharistiam facere*, if they are not merely synonymous for rhetorical effect, would appear to translate something like "bless the bread and give thanks over it [= *eucharistein*], to be followed by the act of oblation itself (*sacrificium* . . . offerret). Discussed at length in *Ep.* 70 n. 10.

56. <non> *sine sacramento solitae praedicationis*. The run of the argument requires either that *non* be added or that it be understood from the preceding clause. It would appear that the prophetess carried out the ritual action in proper form, but to fix the meanings here of *sacramentum* and *praedicatio* with further precision is hazardous. I have translated *praedicatio* in the (unusual but not unparalleled) sense of *prex* (cf. *Ep.* 1 n. 26): at this solemn part of the liturgical proceedings the prophetess adhered to the standard Eucharistic canon, and for parallel cf. *Lib. pontif.* 7: *bic* [= Alexander] *passionem Domini miscuit in praedicatione sacerdotum quando missae celebrantur* (ed. Duchesne 1.127). Discussion in Renaud, *Eucharistic* 210 f.; Michell, JTS 5 (1954) 217 (the reference is to a form of the Sanctus?); Schweitzer, *Archiv für Liturgiewiss.* 12 (1970) 80 ff. (evidence for a *codified* canon?); Hanson, VC 15 (1961) 175 (the reference is to the presentation of a homily?). Bayard, in ed. ad loc., interprets *praedicatio* as a translation of *kérygma* (which it may well be) and deduces that the reference must be to the solemn chanting *à haute voix* of the customary rite: the patristic use of *kérygma* does not entail that deduction (see Lampe, *Pa-*

tristic Greek Lexicon, s.v. esp. §5 for *kérygma* used of “prayers of the Church”). On *sacramentum* (= “cérémonies sacrés”?) see Poukens in de Ghellinck et al. 214.

57. *usitata et legitima verba interrogationis usurpans*. On the baptismal interrogations see *Ep.* 69.7.1 f. and n. 27 ad loc. for other evidence of the formulae customarily used. Firmilian has gone to some lengths to stress that the ritual actions of this proven demoniac were outwardly blameless and orthodox (*legitima*). Compare Cyprian’s argument in *Ep.* 69.7 f. (on Novatianists), on which we are now having a reinforcing commentary.

58. *baptismo . . . quo nequissimus daemon per mulierem baptizavit*. We are meant to register twofold horror: not only was a demon the minister of this baptism, but the agent for that demon was a *woman*. Even in emergencies (when *laici* might baptize) women were still excluded as officiants of baptism, e.g. Tert. *De bapt.* 17.2 ff. CCL 1.291 f. (scandalized that Thecla should be depicted as preaching and baptizing; how could we believe that Paul might give a female power to teach and to baptize . . . ?); *De praesc. haeret.* 41.5 CCL 1.221 (it is characteristic of *heretical* women to dare to teach and “perhaps even to baptize” [*fortasse an et tingere*]); *Didasc. apost.* 3.9: “That a woman should baptize, or that one should be baptized by a woman, we do not counsel, for it is a transgression of the commandment and a great peril to her who baptizes and to him who is baptized. . . . Do not therefore imperil yourselves, brethren and sisters, by acting beside the law of the Gospel” (ed. Connolly 142). For further discussion of this passage see Coyle, *Église et théol.* 9 (1978) 69 ff., and for women in the Montanist ministry Vokes, *Stud. patr.* 9 (1966) 310, and Klawiter, *Church History* 49 (1980) 251 ff.

59. *maxime cui nec symbolum trinitatis . . . defuit*. In this § Firmilian is echoing phrases of *Ep.* 69.7.1 f. (but not found in the later baptismal letters). For discussion on the significance of *symbolum trinitatis* (= ritual pledge to the Trinity, involving triple declaration of belief and triple immersion?) see *Ep.* 69 n. 26.

60. Gal. 3.27, used by Cyprian in *Ep.* 74.5.2: Firmilian is now reproducing Cyprian’s argument of *Ep.* 74.5.1 f., but adding an ironic touch of his own by alluding to Gal. 1.20 (“Before God I do not lie”; cf. “if the apostle does not lie”).

61. Firmilian has taken over Cyprian’s assumption that their op-

ponents all argue that hands are to be laid upon those baptized in heresy *ad accipiendum spiritum*, whereas Stephen, at least, specifically declared that they were to be laid *in paenitentiam* (*Ep.* 74.1.2, where see nn. 6 and 17). Cyprian's conflation is explicable when we recall that in his view forgiveness of sin was not only a central feature of baptism but also essentially a function of the Spirit; there cannot be, therefore, baptism without the Spirit (cf. *Ep.* 74.5.4). See further *Ep.* 69 n. 34.

62. *nisi si a Christo spiritum dividunt*. The precise text may be a little shaky (*dividunt* is not strongly attested), but the argument is secure; and we are meant to appreciate the patent *absurdity* of the view that the Trinity may be divisible. But Cyprian's (*Ep.* 74.5.3) and Firmilian's response does point to a weakness in their position. For Cyprian has already been forced (momently) to concede in *Ep.* 73.9.1 that baptism can be legitimate but incomplete, and in *Ep.* 74.5.1 his argument leads him to claim that baptism renders a man "*apt* for receiving the Holy Spirit" (*ad accipiendum spiritum sanctum idoneus factus*). We can catch here a glimpse of the lines along which their opponents might be arguing, but they are hastily dismissed (cf. Bévenot, *Hey. Journ.* 19 [1978] 137 ff.).

63. Firmilian pauses, now just halfway through his long letter; the *breviter* is sheer convention (cf. *Ep.* 73.26.1: *haec tibi brevibus . . . rescripsimus*, after 20 pages of text!). On Rogatianus see n. 2 above.

64. 2 Cor. 11.2 (not in Cyprian), Ps. 44.11 f. (used in *Test.* 2.29 CCL 3.70 but not in the baptismal letters), Cant. 4.8 and 5.1 (not used by Cyprian). Firmilian has introduced here a subsidiary argument, and texts, of his own devising. On Firmilian's exploitation of Cant. here see Doignon, *Augustinianum* 22 (1982) 179 ff.

65. *haereticorum synagoga*. *Synagoga* is not a Cyprianic word, Watson 295 (though it is common enough in Tertullian: see Claesson, *Index Tertullianus* 3.1606, and cf. *Sent. episc.* LXXXVII. 60 H. 455: *synagoga Satanae*). The word did, however, occur in Cyprian's biblical text, e.g. Num. 20.25, quoted and discussed in *Ep.* 67.4.1 f.). Does one detect in its use here exploitation of anti-Jewish sentiment (cf. §§17.2, 19.2 below)? Firmilian's city of Caesarea must have had a prominent Jewish community if 12,000 Jews can be said to have perished in the Persian attack upon it: see intro. n. 10 for sources.

66. *quos non ipsa peperit pro suis nutrit*. It is unclear whether the analogy derives from Stephen himself (*secundum quod Stephano videtur*) or whether it is an extrapolation on Stephen's position drawn by Firmilian. Firmilian is providing an addendum to Cyprian's argument in *Ep.* 74.6 (heresy, being no bride of Christ, cannot give birth to sons to God).

67. Matt. 12.30 (cf. Luke 11.23) used in *Ep.* 69.1.2 (and *Ep.* 70.3.2) but not in the later baptismal letters.

68. Allusion to Cant. 4.12 f. as used in *Ep.* 74.11.2 (cf. *Ep.* 69.2.1, but with the omission of verse 13a, and see n. 9 ad loc.), and see the discussion of Firmilian's and Cyprian's exploitation of these verses by Doignon, *Augustinianum* 22 (1982) 179 ff. A passing allusion to Gen. 2.8 may follow ("paradise planted by God").

69. 1 Pet. 3.21, cf. *Epp.* 74.11.3 and 69.2.2 (where see n. 11).

70. Allusion to Matt. 16.18 followed by quotations of Matt. 16.19 and John 20.22 f. The same combination of texts occurs in *Ep.* 73.7.1 f. (John 20.22 f. alone in *Ep.* 69.11.1).

71. *episcopis qui eis ordinatione vicaria successerunt*. On the phrase *ordinatione vicaria* see *Ep.* 66 n. 17; and see *Ep.* 33 n. 4 on Cyprian's view of episcopal succession.

72. Similar allusion to Num. 16.1 ff. was made in *Ep.* 73.8.1 and cf. *Ep.* 69.8.1.

73. *qui sic de episcopatus sui loco gloriatur*. While *locus* in Cyprian means so often "station," "position," "dignity" (cf. *Ep.* 3 n. 3), it is clear from this context that the reference is to the actual *place* of the bishopric (Peter's *cathedra* in Rome). Firmilian proceeds sarcastically to exploit a further allusion to Matt. 16.18 (cf. n. 70 above).

74. Rom. 10.2 (not in Cyprian), and for the suggestion of anti-Jewish sentiment (Stephen is worse than the perfidious Jew) cf. n. 65 above.

75. *sordes veteris hominis abluere, antiqua mortis peccata donare*. In the first clause there is probably allusion to Eph. 4.22 (cf. Col. 3.9), the Pauline "old man"; cf. *Ep.* 74.6.1. In the second clause some see a reference to the past mortal sins of the person being baptized, forgiven in baptism (parallel to the *sordes veteris hominis*). But the epithet *antiqua* strongly suggests that the reference must be more remote; it alludes rather to Adam's ancient sin, the wages of which was death. Compare, for close parallel, *De hab. virg.* 23 H. 204: *hominem illic ve-*

terem gratia lavacri exponunt et . . . a sordibus contagionis antiquae iterata nativitate purgantur, and *Ep.* 64.5.2: *infans . . . secundum Adam carnaliter natus contagium mortis antiquae prima nativitate contraxit* (where see n. 20 for commentary).

76. Cyprian took up this issue in *Ep.* 73.16.1 ff. (objection raised by *aliquis*) and *Ep.* 74.5.1 (a view assigned to anonymous opponents, *tribuunt . . . contendunt*): see the commentary on these passages. Firmilian's *inquit* should not oblige us, therefore, to believe he is now reporting Stephen's own argument. *De rebapt.* 10 ff. H. 3.82 ff. gives an extended exposition on the unseemliness of dismissing *all* efficacy for the Name of Jesus when invoked by outsiders.

Firmilian reports that those so baptized heretically are considered by their opponent to have received "the grace of Christ," i.e. they still lack the Spirit of God. Cyprian's views of the Trinity and of baptism (with its forgiveness of sins) could not admit such a division (cf. *Ep.* 69 intro., *Ep.* 74.5.2 ff.).

77. *secundum quod vos in epistula vestra exsecuti estis*. This appears to be a reference to the argument of *Ep.* 74.5 f.

78. *vos dicere Afri potestis cognita veritate errorem vos consuetudinis reliquisse*. Cyprian may not have welcomed such outspoken bluntness: he has painstakingly avoided stating explicitly that the African Church had *abandoned* an earlier tradition (of not repeating baptism) but has, instead, put forward the positive claim that they faithfully adhere to a long-established and carefully-considered doctrine, traceable all the way back to the time of Agrippinus and his Council (*Ep.* 73.3.1, cf. *Epp.* 71.4.1, 70.1.2); see *Ep.* 70 n. 4 for commentary. Firmilian was not misled.

79. *ab initio hoc tenentes quod a Christo et ab apostolis traditum est . . . cum semper sic istic observatum sit*. Firmilian is making a counterclaim to apostolicity (which the newer African Church was unable to do?) and faithfulness to that apostolic tradition at that, directly confronting Stephen's *nihil innovetur nisi quod traditum est*, *Ep.* 74.1.2 (and see n. 5 ad loc.). Cappadocians could proudly point to 1 Pet. 1.1 as evidence for their apostolic foundation. Compare *Ep.* 73.13.3 (and n. 36 there) for other examples of apostolic appropriation in this dispute. Firmilian has carefully prepared for the value of his own present claims by his earlier remarks in §§6.1 f.: there he did not deny apostolic origins for the Roman Church but undermined belief in the

continued faithfulness of that Church in observing *quae sint ab origine tradita*.

80. *etsi novos prophetas recipiunt eosdem tamen patrem et filium nosse nobiscum videntur*. This passage reveals that the general findings of the Council of Iconium were occasioned by the particular case of Montanists or Montanist sympathisers: on that Council see §7.4 and n. 34 above, and on the Trinitarian argument implied see n. 30 above. Its determination did not go, of course, undisputed elsewhere. Dionysius of Alexandria, at least, appears to have accepted Montanist baptism, if we follow Basil *Ep.* 188 can. 1 MG 32.664 f. (but note, to the contrary, Jerome *De viris illust.* 69 ML 23.714 f.: *hic in Cypriani et Africanae synodi dogma consentiens*). It is not surprising that Novatianists (essentially, we would say, in disciplinary *schism*) have similarly been the catalyst for the revival of the same general issue (see *Ep.* 69). Both groups raised difficult questions of determining the *confines* of the Church. There is irony in the fact that Firmilian should, in effect, equate Montanist and Novatianist, for in the closing stages of the history of the Novatianist movement (in the late sixth century) many Novatianist adherents were actually assimilated by Montanists: Gregory, *Byz. Stud.* 2 (1975) 17.

81. Phil. 1.18, as reported in *Ep.* 73.14.1, where see n. 37. Firmilian proceeds merely to paraphrase Cyprian's response in *Ep.* 73.14.2. There is some uncertainty whether *adnuntiatur* or *adnuntietur* should be read here in his biblical citation.

82. This objection was raised in *Ep.* 73.23.1, where see n. 56.

83. Despite uncertainties in the text at a number of points, the argument seems not in doubt. Catechumens had figured in *Ep.* 73.22.1 ff. Firmilian conflates the two categories of those unwittingly deprived of valid baptism as his own contribution. The verb *catechizare* (*qui apud nos catechizati . . . sunt*) is not Cyprianic: Watson 263, Janssen 42.

84. Firmilian continues his glossing of *Ep.* 73.22 ff. He now comments on *Ep.* 73.24.1 ff.

85. 1 Cor. 11.27 (cf. Fahey 460 for Cyprian's use of this text). Cyprian has not cited this text himself (nor made this particular argument) in the baptismal dispute. Firmilian's exploitation of his text (*quale delictum . . . illorum qui admittuntur*) is not altogether consistent with the remarks he has just made in §21.1.

86. Firmilian now adds an appendix of his own on the topic of difficult cases. He asks, a little obscurely: what of the baptism administered by bishops once Catholic but now heretical? He proceeds to argue from lesser to greater. No one (he implies) would accept the validity of baptism administered by former bishops who forfeited their office after apostatizing under the compulsion of persecution; so much the more are they unable to accept the baptism of erstwhile bishops, now heretics, the malice of whose wilful sin is so much the greater. For the type of argument cf. *Ep.* 55.26.1 (involuntary apostasy less heinous than deliberate adultery), where see n. 121 for other parallels (esp. *De unit.* 19 CCL 3.263 providing a similar contrast between the lapsed and the heretic, between *necessitas* and *voluntas in scelere*). For “lapse” Cyprian might have used a verb like *labor* or *cado*, but never *succumbo*, as here: see Hoppenbrouwers, *Recherches* 140 f.

87. *in Patrem et Deum Christi et totius mundi conditorem impia voce blasphemat*. Firmilian uses phrases more appropriate for Cyprian’s attack on his sample heresy, Marcionism (cf. *Ep.* 73.5.2), but not for his own, Montanism (§7.3): cf. *Ep.* 73 n. 18 (Marcion denying that God, the Creator of this world, was the Father of Christ).

88. There is allusion to Cant. 4.12 (cf. n. 68 above) and quotation of Prov. 9.18c (used in *Ep.* 70.1.2 but not in the other baptismal letters: see *Ep.* 70 n. 5).

89. Prov. 19.5 (not in Cyprian).

90. Allusion to Matt. 25.42 (not in Cyprian). Is Firmilian turning inside out the argument of *Ep.* 72.2.3 (on the day of judgment the souls of those baptized in heresy will be sought of the leaders of heresy)? For Firmilian’s argument cf. *Sent. episc.* LXXXVII 80 H. 459 (*cum dies iudicii venerit nobis imputent quod per nos non sint baptizati . . .*). It was the sort of argument that could be used by either side: cf. *De rebapt.* 5 H. 3.75.

91. *lites enim et dissensiones quantas parasti per ecclesias totius mundi*. Prov. 29.22 has just been quoted (not in Cyprian). *Ep.* 67 discloses Stephen’s involvement with disputes within Spain, and *Ep.* 68 reveals Cyprian goading Stephen to be involved with a dispute within Gaul! In Dionysius *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.4 f. (quoted in n. 34) we see Stephen dramatically at loggerheads with the Central-Asian bloc of bishops (cf. §25.1 below), and from Egypt, Dionysius of Alexandria felt constrained to write to Stephen “at great length” remonstrating

with him for destroying the peace of the churches throughout the East—from Palestine, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia through to Pontus and Bithynia—a peace so recently restored (Euseb. *H.E.* 7.4 f.). If we add the African littoral to the list, it makes a formidable ring of *lites* and *dissensiones* now encircling Stephen.

92. *solum te ab omnibus abstinuisti*. See *Ep.* 74 n. 29 on the breakdown of relations between Stephen and Africa, as well as a number of Eastern churches. This passage, §6.2 above, §25.1 below, *Ep.* 74.8.2, and Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.4 all point to *Stephen* as the initiator in the gestures of “excommunication”; however zestfully his opponents threw themselves into the business of polemic and controversy, Stephen won the palm for highhandedness, but that was consistent with his view of the locus of his office (§17.1).

93. *Eph.* 4.1 ff. (there are allusions to *Eph.* 4.4 f. in *Epp.* 70.3.1; 73.1.2, 4.2, 13.3; 74.2.2; 74.11.1): Firmilian is to derive from this text the motif of his concluding remarks.

94. *cum tot episcopis per totum mundum dissensisse, pacem cum singulis vario discordiae genere rumpentem*. For commentary see n. 91 above: the phrase *vario discordiae genere* may be referring to the variety of disputes in which Stephen was embroiled (not to the baptismal question only) or simply to the variety of his abrasive styles.

95. *modo cum orientalibus, quod nec vos latere confidimus*. On Stephen’s dispute with these Eastern bishops see *Ep.* 74 n. 29 and nn. 34 and 91 above. It is a little difficult to be sure what inference to draw from the *quod* clause. It does suggest, on the one hand, that the topic went unmentioned in Cyprian’s letter to Firmilian—yet this *en passant* mode of reference equally suggests that Stephen’s “break” with these Eastern churches was not some immediately recent bombshell that had burst since Cyprian’s despatch of Rogatianus. It was clearly not Firmilian’s manner to be tight-lipped under such circumstances. Perhaps the style of the remark is misleading; it is merely a formulaic phrase for attracting emphasis (= “as I’m sure you are well aware,” “as I have no need to remind you,” *latere* being used like *lanthanein*). One inference, at least, seems reasonably valid: Firmilian had not written to Cyprian at an earlier date on the subject (cf. n. 3 above).

96. *modo cum orientalibus . . . modo vobiscum . . . a quibus legatos*

episcopos . . . suscepit. It is grammatically possible that *a quibus* refers to *both* easterners and southerners, but probabilities are high that it refers to the nearest antecedent only. I have so translated.

And what was the occasion for this episcopal embassy to Rome? It is commonly supposed that the bishops came from Carthage bearing the findings of the Council that was convened on September 1, 256 (i.e. the *Sent. episc. LXXXVII*): the presence of bishops certainly suggests some official delegation from a Council. Therefore, on this reckoning, the rebuff will have occurred around about mid-September 256. That would entail that Cyprian sent Rogatianus off to Capadocia on the return of that embassy to Carthage (? in latish September at the earliest). Such a timetable would make Rogatianus' arrival in Caesarea (allowing some six weeks for the long journey) too late in the year for him to be contemplating a return voyage across the seas, starting off in mid-November (see n. 17 above). The events in Rome must have occurred earlier.

The temperate tone of *Ep. 72* (end of April 256?) certainly does not suggest affairs had yet reached such an impasse. Moreover, the run of this sentence implies that relations had already broken down *before* the bishops actually reached Rome. Stephen had issued his peremptory views (after receiving *Ep. 72*?) to which Cyprian had reacted in no uncertain terms (*Ep. 74.1.1*; *Ep. 74* shows us the sort of commentary he was making on that letter of Stephen's). No doubt, opponents of Cyprian's were not slow to report those outspoken reactions to Rome. Were these bishops sent subsequently as a protest—or dialogue-seeking—delegation, bearing a response to Stephen's declared stand? Stephen refused to enter into debate. (Cyprian's lost response could be referred to in *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* 8 H. 441: there was read out before the assembled bishops a letter of Cyprian's to Stephen [*lectis litteris Cypriani . . . ad Stephanum*]). That does not sound like the *collective* letter, *Ep. 72*.) The calling of the autumn Council and the despatch of Rogatianus to the East will then have followed.

If it was intended that a delegation of Eastern bishops was to be included also in the description, we will have to assume that Firmilian and Helenus and their colleagues sent an embassy of protest to Rome; they will have returned bearing the sort of rebuff

from Stephen as reported in Euseb. *H.E.* 7.5.3 ff. (quoted in n. 34 above).

97. *ut venientibus non solum pax et communio sed et tectum et hospitium negaretur*. Firmilian dwells on the heinousness of Stephen's offence. For hospitality was not only regarded as one of the central Christian virtues; it was also considered to be one of the hallmarks of Christian unity. (Did Stephen quote to them 1 Cor. 5.11, the Pauline injunction "not even to eat with such a person"?) Stephen's calculated insult overthrew the foundations at once of Christian virtue and of Christian brotherhood: *hospitium* and *communio* go together. For some N.T. injunctions on hospitality see Rom. 16.2 (on Phoebe), 1 Pet. 4.9, 3 Jn. 5 ff.; of bishops, 1 Tim. 3.2 and Tit. 1.8; likewise in apostolic literature 1 Clem. 10.7, 11.1, 12.1, *Didache* 12.2, Herm. *Sim.* 9.27.2. And note the adage of Tertullian *De praesc. haeret.* 20.8 CCL 1.202: *probant unitatem communicatio pacis et appellatio fraternitatis et contesseratio hospitalitatis*. See further H. Chadwick, *Stud. patr.* 4 (1961) 281 ff., and *Ep.* 7 n. 10.

Cyprian tends to avoid using *communio* (in favour of *communicatio*): see Watson 268 f., *Ep.* 8 n. 24a, *Ep.* 20 n. 28.

98. Eph. 4.5 f., cf. n. 93 above.

99. *si Dominus unus est, consequens est dicere quia † unus est. Deus* would seem to have fallen out in the *lacuna*; I translate accordingly.

100. *Cyprianum pseudochristum et pseudoapostolum et dolosum operarium dicere*. Stephen appropriately quotes Scripture at Cyprian: Matt. 24.24 plus 2 Cor. 11.13 (on such pseudo formations see Holl, *Hermes* 52 [1917] 301 ff., and Reitzenstein, *Hermes* 52 [1917] 446 ff.: on the Christian use of *operarius*, see Pétré, *Caritas* 263 ff.). A likely context for these abusive remarks is Stephen's instruction which denied fellowship and hospitality to the Africans (n. 95 above).

101. *omnibus nobis*. This phrase is almost certainly corrupt—unless by some chance it is to be construed with *adunatos* at the very end of the greeting. Firmilian proceeds, by ring composition, to pick up the point on unity, in spite of distance, which he had made at the outset (§1.1, where see n. 3). For this technique elsewhere in the correspondence see *Epp.* 28 n. 14, 55 n. 2, 67 n. 32. He concludes his letter with an appropriate biblical allusion, to Phil. 2.2 (*unianimes id ipsum sentientes* [Vulgate]: cf. *unanimis et unum sentientes*).

LETTER 76

Contents: Cyprian is prevented by his own banishment from coming and personally felicitating the martyrs on their glorious honours, some indeed already perfected, others yet to be consummated. These honours are the reward for the virtues of faith and charity in their past lives. The wood with which they have been cudgelled, the mines in which they are now found are but signs of their salvation and their precious worth. Their feet may be manacled, their food meagre, their appearance dishevelled, but their glory will be all the more radiant and splendid hereafter. The sacrifice they are now offering of themselves is precious in the sight of God, and the lessons in courage they are giving have drawn even women and children to follow their lead towards martyrdom. They should pray that they may all together rejoice in the heavenly kingdom.

Date and circumstances: This letter must be written after Cyprian's banishment to Curubis (trial: Aug. 30, 257; he reached Curubis on Sept. 14, Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 12 f. H. C111 f.) but before his return to Carthage, where he awaited his trial and eventual execution (Sept. 14, 258): see *Ep.* 81.1.1 and nn. ad loc. For Cyprian is still (§1.1) *ob confessionem nominis relegatum* (see n. 3 below). Cyprian's initial trial led the vanguard in confession during this Valerianic persecution (as is emphasized in *Epp.* 77.2.2, 78.1.2). We have to allow, therefore, sufficient time to elapse *after* that inaugural trial on Aug. 30, 257 for these clergy and laity to have been tried themselves and sentenced, for some of their number to have died subsequently as martyrs (§1.2), and then for word to have reached Cyprian at Curubis from Numidia (see n. 1 below) telling of their plight. Several months could well have elapsed since the end of August 257 and even longer.

To attempt to narrow down the date even further is hazardous. Certainly the Carthaginian Calendar records the *natale* of Nemesianus, the name of one of the bishops addressed, as falling in the course of December (x[. . .] *Kal. Ian. sancti Nemessiani*, cf. the fifth-century Donatist chronicle *Liber genealogus*: [Valerianus] *sacerdotum domini debellator cuius persecutione passi sunt Romae Xystus martyrium, et Karthagine Cyprianus, Nemessanus vero Tubunis*, Mommsen MGH 9,

Chron. minor. 1.1.196). But the year of his death need not have been 257; indeed it is most unlikely to have been so, for the honour of being the protoepiscopal martyr of Africa is to be reserved for Cyprian, according to Pontius *Vit. Cyp.* 19 H. CIX: *etiam sacerdotales coronas in Africa primus imbueret*. And, besides, there can even be advanced some grounds for hesitation over the identification of our Nemesianus with the entry in the Carthaginian Calendar: see Lambot, *Anal. Boll.* 67 (1949) 263.

Why has Cyprian been banished (cf. the Numidian bishops Agapius and Secundinus, who had been in exile, *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 3 Musurillo 196), whereas these bishops, also Numidian, and their followers (§6.2) have been condemned *in metallum*? At first sight it appears that the explanation could lie in the different penalties appropriate for *humiliores* and *honestiores*; for these Numidian victims have been subjected to beatings with clubs (§2.1), an indignity expressly forbidden against *honestiores* (*Dig.* 48.19.28.2 [Callistratus]: *non omnes fustibus caedi solent sed hi dumtaxat qui liberi sunt et quidem tenuiores homines: honestiores vero fustibus non subiciuntur, idque principalibus rescriptis specialiter exprimitur*; and compare e.g. *Dig.* 48.19.38 for a series of offences carrying the penalties of *in metallum* for *humiliores* and banishment for *honestiores*, and more specifically *Dig.* 47.14.1.3 [Ulpian: concerning cattle stealers] *qui honestiore loco nati sunt, non debent ad hanc poenam [sc. metalli] pertinere sed aut relegandi erunt aut movendi ordine*). But that explanation does not fully satisfy: it does not account for the presence of laity in their company. We will need to assume, in addition, some infringement on their part of the regulations laid down by Valerian for which they are now being penalised capitally (cf. n. 20 below).

Cyprian is sending not only words of comfort to these victims as they toil away in the heat and gloom of their subterranean galleries; his messengers (a subdeacon with three acolytes) arrive distributing among them material comforts as well (*Epp.* 77.3.2, 78.3.1, 79.1.1). Somewhat precious and overblown the rhetoric of this accompanying letter may appear to us to be, but the lyricism is designed to be read and savoured amid the squalor of those wretched surroundings. Cyprian has had the kindness to attempt to uplift the spirits of these sufferers and to ennoble their present miseries. It is noticeable that stress on leadership and guidance runs throughout the letter (e.g.

§§1.2, 1.4, 6.1, 6.2); Cyprian has his focus set upon the bishops who lead their flocks in deed as well as in word. He shows himself conscious of his own role that he is himself also now enacting as *confessor episcopus*, a consciousness which reveals itself so conspicuously in his last letter, *Ep.* 81.

Pontius *Vit. Cyp.* 7 H. XCVII f. places at the very end of his catalogue of Cyprian's works (couched as rhetorical questions) the following: *quis martyres tantos exhortatione divini sermonis erigeret? quis denique tot confessores frontium notatarum secunda inscriptione signatos et ad exemplum martyrii superstites reservatos incentivo tubae caelestis animaret?* That description could readily include this letter, especially as it concerns *confessores* . . . *ad exemplum martyrii superstites reservatos*, §§1.2, 1.4, 6.1 f. (Greg. Naz. *Or.* 24.15 MG35.1188 represents Cyprian as composing exhortatory letters from exile before his death).

On the condemnation of Christians to work in mines see generally J. G. Davies, *Birm. Univ. Hist. Journ.* 6 (1958) 99 ff.; Millar, *Emperor* 182 ff.

1. It is confidently asserted that these nine named bishops are all Numidian. That is a reasonable claim but it is well to be clear on what grounds that assertion rests. Three names only are indubitably Numidian. They are: (1) Nemesianus, from Tubunae (Tobna) in the far SW of Numidia, 85 km from Lambaesis. For further details see *Ep.* 62 n. 1. (2) Polianus *a Mileo* (*Sent. episc.* 13 H. 443), i.e. modern Mila, in the NW vicinity of Cirta, PW 15 (1932) *s.v.* "Mileu(m)" 1659 f. (Treidler); Maier, *L'épiscopat* 173, 383; Lepelley, *Les cités* 2.438 f. (3) Dativus *a Vadis* (*Sent. episc.* 15 H. 443), i.e. modern Badès, south of the Aures, some 90 km to the SE of Lambaesis, PW 2 (1896) *s.v.* "Badiae" 2726 (Dessau); Maier, *L'épiscopat* 110, 289; Fentress, *Numidia* 98. In addition, there is a mine identified in one of the replies to this letter (*Ep.* 79) as *metallum Siguensem*. That would appear to be a mine in the neighbourhood of Sigus, not far to the SE from Numidian Cirta (see *Ep.* 79 n. 1). A group of three of the bishops (Felix, Iader, and the Polianus above) are, therefore, in a *Numidian* mine.

That convergence of evidence makes altogether probable the identification of a Numidian see for five of the six remaining bishops: (1) Victor: there are at least two Numidian bishops so named (*Ep.* 70 *init.*), and see further *Ep.* 62 n. 1. (2 and 3) Felix: for the two bishops

named Felix there are known sees that are Numidian (*a Bagai*, *Sent. episc.* 12 H. 443, and *a Bamaccora*, *Sent. episc.* 33 H. 448). (4) Litteus: there is a Litteus *a Gemellis* *Sent. episc.* 82 H. 460; while there are three localities named Gemellae, this could well be Numidian Gemellae (mod. Mlili), Maier, *L'épiscopat* 146, 349. (5) Iader: *Sent. episc.* 45 H. 452 records Iader *a Midili*. The site has not been certainly located but it appears to have been Numidian (*Notit. prov. et civit. Africae*, Numid. 41, Maier, *L'épiscopat* 86); Benson 608; Mesnage 327; Maier, *L'épiscopat* 173, 336. The name Iader occurs in a list of martyrs on a Byzantine mosaic at Uppenna ILCV 2096) but to judge from its company it does not appear to be connected with this Iader. That leaves one bishop slightly less certainly domiciled, viz. Lucius. While there are other sees that currently have an incumbent named Lucius (*Sent. episc.* 62, 73 H. 455, 457)—and they are not Numidian—there does occur a Lucius *a Castra Galbae* in *Sent. episc.* 7 H. 440, the location of which is not known. It could be Numidian—or a further Lucius may here be involved, now with a high degree of probability presumed Numidian also. On Castra Galba(e) see DHGE 11 (1949) 1460 (J. Ferron).

These bishops, along with the clergy and laity, are now *in metallo*. The replies to this letter come broken into three groups (*Epp.* 77, 78, and 79): we cannot tell whether their writers are merely separated but still within the same mining complex, or whether they are at three separate mines. Compare Euseb. *Mart. Pal.* 13.1 ff. SC 55.170 ff. for a “no small crowd” of confessors (including bishops and clergy), who had been working in copper mines, forcibly broken up and dispersed into small groups (and see also Euseb. *H.E.* 8.13.5). In the text the generalising plural *metallis* is employed in §§1.2, 6.2. Litteus does not figure in these responses (is his absence merely accidental, or has he died meanwhile?).

On this list of bishops see further Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.81; Benson 471 f.; DACL 11 (1933) s.v. “mines” 1218 ff. (H. Leclercq); von Soden, *Prosopographie* 260 f.; Y. Duval, MEFR 96 (1984) 507 ff.

2. *martyribus dei patris omnipotentis et Iesu Christi domini nostri et dei conservatoris nostri aeternam s.* On this proleptic use of “martyr” see *Ep.* 10 n. 1. Observe the word *conservator* (not *salvator*, a neologism preternaturally rare in Cyprian: see *Ep.* 21 n. 3). For this unusually elaborate *salutatio*, with its emphasis on the spiritual sense of *salus* (*aeternam s[alutem]*)—wishes for continued physical health being inap-

propriate in an address to aspirant martyrs—see Lanham, *Salutatio formulas* 24, 26 f.; Bastiaensen 14 f.; and cf. *Epp.* 6 and 10 *init.* (*perpetuam s.*).

3. *nisi me quoque ob confessionem nominis relegatum praefiniti loci termini coercerent.* Cyprian had been banished to Curubis on August 30, 257, being the first African victim of the new persecution and pointing the way for others to follow later, *Epp.* 77.2.2, 78.1.2 (this letter, therefore, is written quite some time after that date): *Act. procons. Cyp.* 1.1 cf. 2.1 Musurillo 168, 170. Curubis was a port on the east coast of Cape Bon, some 55 km, as the crow flies, east from Carthage; a place described by Pontius (who voluntarily shared his bishops's sojourn there, *Vit. Cyp.* 12 H. C111) as being providentially furnished for the great man as an *apricum et competentem locum* (a sunny and congenial spot). Though a bishop is not recorded at Curubis until 411, it seems clear that there had been established in Cyprian's day an active Christian community there (*ipsorum inde civium caritatem quae repraesentabat omnia quibus videbatur esse fraudatus*, Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 12 H. C11). On Curubis (modern Korba), PW 4 (1901) 1893 (Des-sau); Gascoü, *Politique municipale* 21 f.; Maier, *L'épiscopat* 136.

Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, about this same time was similarly being sent (by the acting prefect Mussius Aemilianus) to a small and remote village in Egypt called Cephro ("This is the place that I have chosen, in accordance with the command of our Augusti," *ap. Euseb. H.E.* 7.11.10).

Cyprian uses of himself the less severe *relegatum*; his biographer (by contrast) prefers the more stringent and emotive *exilium*, *exul* (8 times in cc. 11 and 12, with only one *relegatus*, H.C1 ff.)—as do these correspondents in their reply *Ep.* 77.2.2 (*nec ire in exilium recusavit*). Cyprian's retention of his property (*de hortis nostris*, *Ep.* 81.1.1; *in hortis suis*, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 2.1 Musurillo 170, cf. Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 15 H. CVI) suggests that relegation was, legally, the more accurate description.

4. *gloria quidem vestra poscebat . . . ut ad conspectum adque ad complexum vestrum venire ipse deberem.* Though employing here a standard rhetorical trope (compare closely *Ep.* 6.1.1 f. and see further Thraede, *Grundzüge* 121, 149 ff., 192), Cyprian certainly does not give the impression that he regarded as impossible for him a journey into Numidia. We should probably assume for him more active jour-

neying than our evidence attests (cf. the trip to Hadrumetum, *Ep.* 48.1, the thwarted visit to Thibaris, *Ep.* 58.1.1).

5. Observe that some of their company have died already (*ex vobis pars iam martyrii sui consummatione praecesserit*), presumably as a consequence of the extreme hardships of the mining or prison conditions (rather than as a result of having been condemned to death, although condemnation to the mines was regarded as the capital penalty "nearest to death," *proxima morti poena, metalli coercitio*, Callistratus in *Dig.* 48.19.28). For similar words of consolation for delays in martyrdom see e.g. *Epp.* 10.5.1 f., 61.1.1 ff.

6. The emphasis upon the virtues of constancy and tenacity, dutifulness and obedience, harmony and charity, discipline and rigour is quite remarkable—to culminate his two periods here, addressed to potential martyrs, Cyprian has chosen the phrases *in disciplinae severitate censuram* and *paribus obsequiorum meritis*. The stress of division and disorder within the Church—despite the onset of persecution—continues still as a major preoccupation (cf. closely *Epp.* 28.2, 37.4).

7. The allusion is to 2 Tim. 2.20, Fahey 513 f. (gold and silver vessels). The nature of the literary conceit here has been sometimes overlooked and the deduction accordingly drawn that these confessors are in a gold and silver mine, (e.g. Sullivan, *Life* 6: "a mine famous for its gold and silver"; cf. Gsell, *Hespéris* 8 [1928] 6).

8. *nec christianorum pedes ad infamiam copulant sed clarificant ad coronam*. In the use of the word *clarifico* there may possibly be a passing baptismal suggestion (common, of course, in contexts of martyrdom, conceived of as the second baptismal ceremony): cf. *phōtizō* used in the sense of *baptizo*, Lampe s.v. §viii. And for the association of *feet* with the baptismal liturgy, see *Ep.* 64.4.1 f. For variations on the present theme that iron chains and manacles have become brilliant ornaments and precious jewellery, compare Ignat. *Ad Eph.* 11.2 ("I carry about my chains, spiritual pearls"), Polycarp *Ad Philip.* 1.1 ("those bound in holy chains, which are the diadems . . ."), or *Mont. et Luc.* 6.2 Musurillo 218 ("O iron, more noble and precious than the most refined gold"). The word *infamia* carries technical connotations, implying degradation, official loss of social dignity: see Millar, *Pap. Brit. School Rome* 52 (1984) 127 ff.

9. The partial quotation from Deut. 8.3 (cf. Matt. 4.4, Luke 4.4), Fahey 268, is followed by allusion to Gal. 3.27, Fahey 475 f.

10. There is allusion to 1 Cor. 11.3, Fahey 428 (*cum sit caput viri Christi*). Cyprian is aware that the prisoners in the mines have had their heads half-shaven (*semitonsi capitis capillus*; cf. in their reply *Ep. 77.3.1: semitonsis capitibus capillaturam adaequasti*), meaning, presumably, with the hair close-cropped on one side. To mutilate the hair in this way (Romans setting such store by careful coiffure) was considered a mark of special degradation: it is found as a disfiguring humiliation, e.g. used to identify or to punish runaway slaves (e.g. *Apul. Met. 9.12: frontes litterati et capillum semirasi et pedes anulati*; cf. *Catul. Carm. 59.5: ab semiraso . . . ustore*; *Petron. Sat. 103: Radat utriusque non solum capita sed etiam supercilia. Sequar ego frontes notans inscriptione sollerti ut videamini stigmatate esse puniti* (the whole episode indicating that shaven heads, as well as tattooed foreheads, were regarded as signs of punished slaves). Note also Artemidorus *Oneirocrit. 1.21* ed. Pack 28: "Whenever someone [dreams that he] has his head half-bald and is of a bad conscience, he will be condemned to the penalty of public work. For in this instance, too, this is the mark of the condemned." Hence the oddity, in the Roman's eyes, that the Egyptian priests of Isis should *voluntarily* shave their own heads: see e.g. *Min. Fel. Oct. 22.1* (with n. 292 ad loc. in ACW 39). I have not anywhere been able to find half-shaving the hair laid down as a legal punishment.

11. *Phil. 3.21* (most unusually for Cyprian's practice, the mood and tense of the verb in the text has been changed—*transformaverit* for *transformavit*—to accommodate to the syntax of this sentence).

12. *illic nunc sacerdotibus Dei facultas non datur offerendi et celebrandi sacrificia divina*. Contrast the Eucharistic celebrations possible, under prison conditions, during the Decian persecution, *Ep. 5.2.1*. But the present circumstances of life in the mines, reinforced by the specific Valerianic regulation against Christians' holding religious assemblies (*ne in aliquibus locis conciliabula faciant*, *Act. procon. Cyp. 1.6* Musurillo 170), now preclude that possibility. Observe the similarly stringent conditions in contemporary Egypt: "For even to this day the prefect does not cease from putting to a cruel death, as I have already men-

tioned, some of those who are brought before him, while others he mutilates with tortures, or allows to pine away in imprisonment and chains, giving orders that no one is to go near them and investigating whether any has been caught so doing" (Dionys. Alex. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.11.24 f.; tr. after Oulton).

13. Ps. 50.19, Fahey 141 f.

14. Rom. 12.1 f., Fahey 435.

15. Ps. 115.3 f., 6, Fahey 150. All three quotations just cited figured in Cyprian's repertoire of texts to be reproduced for martyrdom occasions: e.g. *Test.* 3.6, 16, *Ad Fort.* 8 CCL 3.94, 108, 196 f.; *Ep.* 6.2.1; *Ep.* 10.2.3. Cyprian has taken pains carefully to interweave the themes of these quotations into his hortatory text.

16. *remunerans in nobis quicquid ipse praestitit et honorans quod ipse perfecit*. For this theme that Christ both bestows and wins the martyr's victory, see *Ep.* 10 n. 31 with parallels and literature there cited.

17. Matt. 10.19 f., Fahey 294 ff., followed by Luke 21.14 f., Fahey 364.

18. Matt. 5.19, Fahey 273 f.

19. The allusion is to Matt. 13.8 (Fahey 305 f.): in *De hab. virg.* 21 H. 202 Cyprian repeats the present notion that for martyrs the first fruits (*primus fructus*) are one-hundredfold, for virgins sixtyfold. There is a rich history of this notion in the early Church (noting esp., of course, the pseudo-Cyprianic tractate *De centesima* ML Supp. 1.53 ff.; *Act Maximil.* 3.3 Musurillo 248: *cum centenario numero te suspiciam* probably alludes to the martyr's hundredfold reward). For studies on this topic see Reitzenstein, ZNTW 15 (1914) 60 ff.; Hummel 132 ff.; Quacquarelli, *Il triplici frutto*, esp. 22 ff.; Beatrice, *Augustinianum* 19 (1979) 215 ff., and idem, in *Paradoxos Politeia* 3 ff. In postpersecution times the schema tended to be converted to one-hundredfold for virgins (virginity being construed as spiritual martyrdom), sixtyfold for the widowed (with thirtyfold reserved for the wedded).

For similar emphasis on the double rewards enjoyed by virgin-martyrs, note, e.g. Prudent. *Peristeph.* 14.7 (Agnes: *duplex corona est praestita martyri*), Ambrose *De virgin. ad Marcellin.* 1.9 ML 16.201 f. (Agnes: *habetis igitur in una hostia duplex martyrium pudoris et religionis. Et virgo permansit et martyrium obtinuit*; cf. Thecla *ibid.* 2.19 f. ML 16.223 f.) and compare Augustine *De sanct. virgin.* 44 ff. ML 40.422

ff. (e.g. 45 ML 40.423: *sed quid significet fecunditatis illa diversitas, viderint qui haec melius quam nos intelligunt . . . sive virginitas accedente martyrio centenum fructum impleat . . .*). This emphasis is visually represented in the depiction of virgin-martyrs in early Christian iconography, e.g. the series of medallion portraits of 12 virgin-martyrs in the soffit of the arch in the mosaic programme of the Poreč Cathedral in Istria (sixth century).

20. Our information for the first stage of the Valerianic persecution clearly indicates that higher clergy only were directly singled out for punishment; the lower clergy and laity would become involved only if they infringed the regulations regarding assemblies and cemeteries (see intro. pp. 8 ff.). We should assume, therefore, that these women and children have been caught, let us imagine, illicitly meeting with their clergy, or the like; we cannot, of course, tell how many of the nine bishops addressed have members of their own flocks present, but Cyprian's manner of presentation suggests certainly more than one. Strictly speaking, women were not condemned *in metallum* but *in ministerium metallicorum*, Ulpian in *Dig.* 48.19.8.8.

21. *unumquemque vestrum stare ad promissum Dei praemium, de iudicii die esse securum*. For the expression *stare ad* cf. *Ep.* 55 n. 88. Behind Cyprian's remarks here lies the concept of the *immediate* rewards in paradise which the martyr is unquestioningly expected to enjoy: on this concept see *Ep.* 6 n. 14, *Ep.* 55. n. 90.

22. Rom. 8.18, Fahey 430 f.

23. *ad inpetrandum quod in pressuris petitur facilius oratio est*. On the special efficacy attached to the intercessory prayers of confessors and martyrs, see *Epp.* 6 n. 14, 15 n. 1, 21 n. 16, 60 n. 15.

24. *pacis vinculo copulati contra haereticorum iniurias et pressuras gentium simul stetimus*. There may be a passing allusion to Ephes. 4.3, Fahey 483 f. ("the bond of peace"); cf. *Ep.* 78 n. 4. Observe the close association, in Cyprian's mind, of heresy with persecution, on which see *Ep.* 43 n. 11, and for Cyprian's continued preoccupation with heresy see n. 6 above.

25. *et nostri semper et ubique meminisse*. Cyprian adroitly revivifies a tired epistolary cliché by the addition of *et ubique*, a rare supplement (= whether on earth or in paradise).

LETTER 77

Contents: Cyprian's letter, as all his writings, has revealed his many virtues. And as a true teacher, he recited first at his trial the words his pupils should repeat later at theirs, words which have roused others to martyrdom and slain the Adversary. He will share with those others the reward of a hundredfold in heaven. His letter has restored their spiritual strength, just as his ministrations and those of Quirinus have restored their physical strength. May they pray for one another.

Date and circumstances: For the date (late 257, approximately) see *Ep.* 76 intro.

Despite the occasional lapse into clumsiness (e.g. §3.2), this is a letter written by a well-educated (if flowery) hand, obeying strictly the etiquette of reciprocating the courtesies, consolations, and exhortations contained in the epistle from Cyprian to which this letter responds. What is so strikingly alien is that this epistolary etiquette, with its ornate—sometimes ridiculous (e.g. § 3.1: Cyprian's letter as hair restorer)—arabesques of politesse, should be so faithfully followed, even though it was composed in the cramped and smoky darkness of the mines and by men emaciated with hunger and exhausted from their grim labours. We must appreciate that Cyprian is now himself a confessor; he is being honoured, in turn, by such carefully turned rhetorical efforts and polite literary attentions. It is open to suspect that Nemesianus may in fact have been the *scriptor*: he was by far the most voluble of the bishops recorded in the *Sent. episc.* (5 H. 438).

We learn incidentally (§1.1) of the wide dissemination of Cyprian's writings (*tractatus: libri* as well as *litterae*)—a process we can glimpse e.g., in *Epp.* 54.3.4, 73.26.2 (*libelli*). And we further learn that Cyprian's confession before the proconsul initiated this persecution in Africa (§§2.1 f.).

1. *Cypriano fratri Nemesianus Dativus Felix et Victor in Domino aeternam s.* *Ep.* 77 is written in reply to *Ep.* 76: it starts off, as it continues, with conscious echoes of the letter to which it responds (cf.

Ep. 76: *Cyprianus Nemesiano* etc. . . . *aeternam s.*). On this form of address see *Ep.* 76 n. 2. Observe the touch of deference achieved by placing Cyprian's name first; by way of contrast compare the impertinent *salutatio* of *Ep.* 23: *universi confessores Cypriano papati s.*, where see n. 1 for discussion.

On the bishops mentioned here see *Ep.* 76 n. 1. Nemesianus and Dativus come from sites to the SW and SE of Lambaesis by about 85 km or so. If Felix is *a Bagai*, he comes from about 80 km to the east of Lambaesis. And the Victor (? *ab Octavu*, *Sent. episc.* 78 H. 459), if he is to be identified with the Victor of *Ep.* 62 (there also found in the company of Nemesianus), would hail likewise from the more remote and southwesterly districts of Numidia (see *Ep.* 62 n. 1). That suggests that we may have here a group of bishops and their followers (§3.3: *omnes nostri qui nobiscum sunt*) coming from a common area who were perhaps tried and sentenced together.

2. *quaecumque bona in multis libris tuis intulisti*. Cyprian will have composed by now—or, in the case of the *Testimonia*, perhaps rather seen to the compilation of—at least ten such *libri* (leaving open whether the *Ad Fortunatum* may possibly be a production of this present period at Curubis. On the *Ad Fort.* see *Ep.* 58 intro., *Ep.* 22 n. 5).

3. *quid nos discipuli secuti apud praesidem dicere deberemus prior apud acta proconsulis pronuntiasti*. From this we can deduce that (1) Cyprian's trial on Aug. 30, 257 took place before the writers' own appearance in court. Indeed, they go on to make it clear that they understand it to enjoy the distinctive honour of having been the *initial* trial of the persecution (*in acie prima; tua innocens anima quae nec saeculi primos impetus timuit . . . ipsa martyrium prior duxit*); cf. *Ep.* 78.1.2: *qui prior nobis ducatum ad confessionem nominis Christi praebuisti*.

(2) They have knowledge of some details of that trial of Cyprian's, in particular of the words he spoke there (hence, too, below *spiritali gladio*, . . . *verbis tuis*). Quite possibly there is a version of the *acta* (court proceedings) already in circulation (corresponding to §1 of our *acta proconsularia*, Musurillo 168 ff.); it is joined to the account of his second trial (§2 ff.) by variant sutures and apparently circulated first independently—see Delehay, *Passions* 86 f. Indeed, Pontius Vit. *Cyp.* 11 H. C1, writing shortly after Cyprian's martyrdom, can refer unequivocally

cally to transcripts of the words spoken by Cyprian at this trial: *et quid sacerdos Dei proconsule interrogante responderit, sunt acta quae referant*. He expects his readers to be familiar with those celebrated utterances.

For the recording of such judicial proceedings cf. Lucian *Apol.* 12 ("my personal responsibility in this administration of Egypt is not the least important—the initiation of court cases and their arrangement, the recording of all that is done and said, . . . keeping the clearest and most accurate copy of the magistrate's decisions with the greatest faithfulness and putting them on public record to be preserved for all time"); and for the use of shorthand stenographers in making such recordings: Holl, *Neue Jabrb.* 33 (1914) 536; Tengström, *Die Protokollierung*; Posner, *Archives* 200 ff.; Coles, *Atti dell'XI congresso . . . di papirologia* 118 ff.

Observe, too, that Dionysius of Alexandria was able to quote lengthy extracts from the official record of his own trial, which took place just about the same time as Cyprian's, in Alexandria, *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.11.6 ff.

(3) There is a distinction to be drawn between the proconsul (before whom Cyprian appeared) and the *praeses* (before whom these bishops were tried). That provides confirmation, if confirmation is needed, that these particular bishops are Numidian and therefore fall under the jurisdiction of its proprætorian legate: see *Ep.* 76 n. 1. The identification of the proconsul of Africa Proconsularis is certain. He was Aspasius Paternus, proconsul 257/258: PIR² A. 1263; Barbieri 1455; Thomasson, *Die Statthalter* 2.123 f. However, there is much less clarity over the probable governor of Numidia. Round about this time fell the governorships of both M. Veturius Veturianus and L. Magius Valerianus (to be located somewhere within the 255–58 period), though that of Veturius Veturianus is likely to be the earlier, perhaps starting in 253. But before 260 must also be placed the governorship of C. Macrinus Decianus, and to complicate matters even further, we must also accommodate somewhere about this season the extraordinary *ducatus* of M. Cornelius Octavianus *per Africam Numidiam Mauretaniamque*. Chances are, however, on our present evidence, that the *praeses* whom we meet here (in the last quarter of 257, or thereabouts) was Magius Valerianus. The (inconclusive) evidence is set out in Thomasson, *Die Statthalter* 2.219 ff.; idem, *Opuscula romana*

7 (1969) 188 f.; cf. Pflaum, *Carr. proc.* 905 ff.; Christol, *Antiq. afric.* 10 (1976) 69 ff.; and my article in *Antichthon* 4 (1970) 82 ff.

4. *in acie prima spiritali gladio diabolum interfecisti*. The sequel makes it clear that by “spiritual sword” is signified the vanquishing words uttered by Cyprian against his persecutor at his trial. In fact, however, in the extant version of the *acta*, his words have the ring of studious dignity and of consciously controlled, but unyielding, restraint rather than of aggressive defiance. For the present image cf. *Ep.* 22.1.1: *ipsam anguem maiorem, metatorem antichristi . . . confessus deterruisti vocibus illis et verbis deificis quibus . . . vicisti*, where see n. 5. For the devil conceived as the agent of persecution see also *Epp.* 8 n. 6, 21 n. 35.

5. *non est a centesimo praemio minor tua innocens anima*. The confessors had been reminded in *Ep.* 76.6.2 that their spiritual returns would be a hundredfold (where see n. 19); they now, in turn, reaffirm to Cyprian that his rewards will be similarly set at that highest of rates, the recompense of the martyred. Their reassuring tone suggests that they say this aware that he, unlike themselves, stands in no immediate hopes of death (this emerges with greater clarity at the end of this paragraph: *tua innocens anima . . . martyrum de saeculo iam excedentium* [= themselves] *sociata esse coepit*).

6. *nec in deserto loco morari horruit*. Rhetorical exaggeration for the salubrious Curubis to which Cyprian has been sent: see *Ep.* 76 n. 3. Even his biographer Pontius felt constrained to describe the place as an *abditum et abstrusum locum*, *Vit. Cyp.* 11 H. C1 (an obscure and out-of-the-way spot) despite its manifest amenities (thankfully furnished by divine providence for Cyprian’s benefit: *provisum esse divinitus etiam pro animo tanti viri*, *ibid.* 12 H. C11).

7. *ipsa martyrium prior duxit* (variant reading, *dixit*). It was regarded as a very special honour to lead the way to martyrdom. This is clearly disclosed by *Ep.* 6.4 (where see nn. 32 and 33), *Ep.* 28.1.1 f., *Ep.* 39.2.1, *Ep.* 60.1.2 (with n. 2 ad loc.). The martyrs were consoled in *Ep.* 76 for the delays in their martyrdom (§§1.2, 1.4, 6.1 f.), for thus they were leading others by their example to martyrdom. They are now reciprocating with similar words of praise and solace for Cyprian.

8. See *Ep.* 76.2.1 ff. for allusions to the clubs, chains, and shaven hair (with n. 10 ad loc. on the latter).

9. *montes metalli in plana deduxisti*. By itself this clause might suggest opencut quarrying (e.g. for Numidian marble), were it not for the insistence here on the darkness and smoke.

10. *tetrum odorem fumi discussisti*. The smoke can be due to several factors. It may be merely the accumulation from the torches used to light the ill-ventilated mining tunnels. But fires could also be used to break up the mining face itself (being heated and then doused with cold water); cf. Diod. Sicul. 3.12.4 (fire only), Pliny *N.H.* 33.21.71 (fire and vinegar: "this method makes the galleries suffocating through the heat and smoke" [*cuniculos vapore et fumo strangulat*]). Further smoke would also be produced if smelting were involved on the mining site (see *Ep.* 79 n. 1). For further reading Davies, *Birm. Univ. Hist. Journ.* 6 (1958) 99 ff. esp. 102 f.; van Nostrand in Tenney Frank (ed.), *Economic Survey* 3.150 ff.

11. *ministerium tuum et Quirini dilectissimi nostri*. Nothing precludes the identification of this generous donor (cf. *Ep.* 78.3.2) with the dedicatee of the *Testimonia* (the only other Quirinus in the Cyprianic corpus). When he is addressed in the Preface to *Test.* 1 and 2, it is somewhat in terms of a patron of some social standing (but also of a Christian of no long standing): *obtemperandum fuit, fili carissime, desiderio tuo . . . sicut petisti . . . quae legenti tibi interim prosunt ad prima fidei liniamenta formanda* etc. CCL 3.3; cf. *Test.* 3 proem.: *Et quia tibi plenum dilectionis obsequium debeo feci quod petitisti*, *ibid.* 73. His lack of title here suggests a layman (I do not know how Watson 272 claims that he "certainly belonged to the clergy"). See also Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.278; Harnack, *Über verlorene* 42 f.; Sage 143 f.

12. *quod per Herennianum hypodiaconum et Lucanum et Maximum et Amantium acoluthos distribuendum misisti*. On the duties of subdeacons see *Ep.* 8 n. 1, and of acolytes *Ep.* 7 n. 13. All four clerics reappear in *Ep.* 78.1.1, but the last (and most junior?) acolyte Amantius disappears from *Ep.* 79.1.1. (There is considerable manuscript uncertainty in recording the names of these clerics.) A subdeacon Herennianus—presumably this Herennianus—reappears in the acts of Montanus and Lucius playing a similar role, ministering to the needs of Carthaginian prisoners, *Act. Mont. et Luc.* 9.2 Musurillo 220 (date: spring 259). Note that junior clergy are still quite free to travel about unmolested and that Cyprian, now exiled, is still able to have clergy at his command. On Cyprian's clergy generally see *Letters of*

Cyprian 1 ACW 43 intro. pp. 39 ff., and on his finances *Ep.* 5 nn. 9 and 10, *Ep.* 7 n. 11.

13. *rogemus, sicut mandasti, ut Deum et Christum et angelos in omnibus actibus nostris habeamus fautores*. Cyprian's bidding was voiced in *Ep.* 76.7.3. The addition here of the words *et angelos* draws attention to the insignificant role that "angels" play in Cyprian's own spirituality. They happen to figure in none of his own letters in the extant correspondence (by contrast Firmilian, *Ep.* 75. 2.1 f.).

14. *domine frater*. There are grounds for suspecting that the addition of *domine* here is more than a mere flourish of courtesy, for this is the only time in the correspondence that Cyprian is so addressed, and he is now a confessor. *Epp.* 21 and 22 amply illustrate the use of *domine* as an incipient "Christianism," consciously employed as a mark of deference and respect when referring to or saluting confessors and martyrs: see *Ep.* 21 n. 2 for discussion.

15. *saluta omnes qui tecum sunt*. The deacon Pontius as well as Cyprian's *domestici* accompanied Cyprian into exile (cf. Jerome *De viris illust.* 68 ML 23.714: *Pontius, diaconus Cypriani, usque ad diem passionis eius cum ipso exilium sustinens*). There Cyprian enjoyed *frequentiam visitantium fratrum*, among whom would doubtless have figured the liberal Quirinus, Cyprian's codonor (see *Pont. Vit. Cyp.* 12 H. C11 f.). The Christian community at Curubis itself also rallied round the exiled Cyprian (*ipsorum inde civium caritatem*, *Pont. loc. cit.*): see *Ep.* 76 n. 3.

16. *omnes nostri qui nobiscum sunt*. This use of *nostri* (= our people) is rare in Cyprianic usage but see *Ep.* 17 n. 10. For the faithful who accompanied these bishops of theirs into martyrdom, *Ep.* 76.6.2.

LETTER 78

Contents: Lucius and his brethern have received Cyprian's letter; it gives them renewed resolution, enabling them to follow the lead Cyprian has set ahead of them and thus to share in Cyprian's divine favours. They remain confident of their heavenly rewards, relying on the inspired words uttered by Cyprian in his letter. They have also

received the contributions from Cyprian and Quirinus; they constitute a sacrifice which God regards with favour.

Date and circumstances: For the date see *Ep.* 76: this letter must be contemporaneous with *Epp.* 77 and 79, brought back by Cyprian's clerical messengers. It is a noticeably less articulate and sophisticated composition than *Ep.* 77, but like that letter it carefully responds to various parts of Cyprian's epistle. In particular it returns Cyprian's eulogy of their spiritual glories by emphasizing Cyprian's own honour in being the leader in confession, and the example he has set for all to follow.

1. *Cypriano fratri et collegae Lucius et qui cum eo sunt fratres omnes in deo s.* On the possible identity of this bishop, Lucius, see *Ep.* 76 n. 1. Is *collega* used here as one *episcopal* colleague to another (the standard Cyprianic usage) or as of confessors to a fellow confessor (as, e.g. in *Ep.* 22.1.1, 22.3.1: *confessores Domini . . . inter quos et Saturninus . . . collega meus*; *Ep.* 10.4.3: *Mappalicus suo et collegarum suorum nomine proconsuli repromisit*)?

2. The letter in question is *Ep.* 76; for these clerics, *Ep.* 77 n. 12.

3. *qui prior occupasti de quo cepisti inde hoc nobis communicasti.* I translate but without conviction that I have understood what the Latin (if it is accurately recorded) is wanting to convey. Note the emphasis in this section on Cyprian's leadership (and priority) in confession: a special privilege, for which see *Ep.* 77 n. 7.

4. *quibus unus fuit spiritus in coniunctionem pacis.* Lucius here unmistakably alludes to Ephes. 4.3, echoing the sentiment with which Cyprian had closed his letter (*Ep.* 76.7.3: *qui hic caritatis et pacis vinculo copulati . . . simul stetimus*); Cyprian's text of Ephes. 4.3 read: *satis agentes servare unitatem spiritus in coniunctione pacis.*

5. *precum tuarum gratia.* The spiritual flattery of Cyprian's own letter (*Ep.* 76.7.3: *nunc vobis in precibus efficacior sermo est*) is now returned to him; the sentiment is repeated in §2.2 *ad fin.*

6. *abundans mensura . . .*: there appears to be allusion to Luke 6.38 (Vulgate: *mensuram . . . supereffluentem*).

7. *et te nobis litteris tuis repraesentasti.* This assurance carefully re-

sponds to Cyprian's opening words in *Ep.* 76.1.1: *quomodo possum repraesento me vobis*.

8. *ad prophetiam quam litteris tuis spiritu sancto plenus spondisti*. For the inspired words of the martyr-to-be (for so Cyprian is deemed), see *Ep.* 10 nn. 19 and 20.

9. *si nos . . . in mente habueris*. For this prayer formula cf. *Ep.* 79.1.2: *ut nos . . . in mentem habere digneris*, and see *Ep.* 62 n. 12.

10. The allusion is to Gen. 8.20 f., but whereas Noah's sacrifice was chosen from all beasts and birds that were clean, theirs (being, presumably, in cash, cf. *Ep.* 79.1.1 *quantitatem*, where see n. 4) is modified to be derived *ex omni opere mundo*. Crawford, "Eucharistic Symbolism" 185 f., mistakenly interprets the passage to mean that Cyprian has sent the Eucharistic species to his fellow bishop Lucius. On Quirinus see *Ep.* 77 n. 11.

11. Not extant; did the other correspondents (in *Epp.* 77, 79) also write separately to Quirinus?

12. *Saluta omnes qui tecum sunt*. On Cyprian's companions in exile see *Ep.* 77 n. 15.

LETTER 79

Contents: A note of thanks to Cyprian for his comforting words—and for his donation of money.

Date and circumstances: A letter contemporary with *Epp.* 76–78 and, therefore, composed towards the end of 257 or thereabouts. The gauche phrasing and ungainly sentence structures disclose a low level of literary attainment in Felix, the bishop who penned it. To such a poorly educated bishop (and how many more like him were there? cf. *Ep.* 24 intro.) Cyprian could well have appeared a brilliantly sophisticated figure commanding from his impressive eminence deferential following as church leader. It is an illuminating social document.

1. *Felix Iader Polianus una cum presbyteris et omnibus nobiscum commorantibus apud metallum Siguensem*. On these three bishops see *Ep.* 76

n. 1. The identification of their present whereabouts (*apud metallum Siguensem*) has occasioned uncertainty (and there is additional manuscript uncertainty as well, e.g. the variant reading *Singuense[m]*). But most would be agreed that the best surmise is that *Siguensem* is to be associated with Sigus, a town some 40 km SSE of Cirta in Numidia (= Bordj ben Zekri, PW 2A [1923] 2458 [Dessau]; CIL 8 p. 552). The normal epithet of Sigus is, however, Siguitanus, e.g. *Gest. conlat. Carth.* 411 1.197, 209 CCL 149A.141, 156; CIL 8.5693 ff. (have we perhaps an easily garbled version of *Siguitensis*, the form given in ML 11.1333?). For discussion DACL 11 (1933) s.v. "mines" 1222 f. (H. Leclercq); Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.25; Gsell, *Bull. de la Soc. archéol. de Sousse* 1 (1903) 137 f.; cf. idem, *Vieilles Explorations* 10; Saumagne, *Saint Cyprien, évêque de Carthage* 152 n. 3 (citing a communication from M. Solignac). There is evidence of Roman copper mining in the vicinity. (Hinchliff 122 talks of "Numidian bishops who were sent to the salt mines": I presume this is intended figuratively).

The second most favoured, but less likely, site is provided by the *Tabula Peutingeriana*: it refers to an obscure spot called Siguese [*sic*] in the neighbourhood of Sicca Veneria, on the road from Thacia to Sicca (= Le Kef, 165 km to the SW of Carthage). Traces of lead mining have been observed: Gsell, *Bull. de la Soc. archéol. de Sousse* 1 (1903) 137 f.; Haywood in Tenney Frank, *Economic Survey* 4.53. This site would take the bishops out of a Numidian context (not, of course, a decisive objection); Mauretanian Siga (*Princ. Encyl. Class. Sites* 838 [Février]) would take them even further away.

By an extraordinary reading Saumagne, *Saint Cyprien* 152 f. interprets the phrase *commorantes apud metallum Siguensem* as referring not to convicts in the mine but to strangers (not members of the local community) resident in a place called "the mine of Sigus." Cyprian's luridly detailed description of the privations of these Christian miners in *Ep.* 76 becomes, accordingly, metamorphosed into a visionary's feverish delirium. That is one way of discarding historical evidence.

2. On these clerics see *Ep.* 77 n. 12. Amantius is missing from the group; is he perhaps now on his way back to Cyprian, bearing the other two replies (*Epp.* 77, 78)?

3. *fratres nostros fortes et incolumes adiuvantibus orationibus tuis*. Is the emphasis on the *physical* dangers, to which these clerics expose themselves in undertaking such works of mercy but which they have

so far escaped? Or do the bishops rather allude to the *spiritual* perils to which the faith of these clerics has been exposed in these times of persecution but which they have successfully withstood? For *incolumis* used in the sense of "with faith unimpaired," see *Ep.* 5 n. 3. Note the stress on the efficacy of Cyprian's prayers, for which cf. *Ep.* 78.1.2 (with n. 5 ad loc.). Given the clumsy grammar of the letter, it is quite possible that the words *fortes et incolumes* etc. should refer to the writers themselves and not to the clerical messengers ("we continue steadfast and safe thanks to . . .").

4. *oblationis nomine quantitatem una cum litteris tuis quas misisti*. The letter is, of course, *Ep.* 76. For *quantitas* in the present sense of "sum of money," cf. *Ep.* 62.2.2: *redimatur nummaria quantitate*; *Ep.* 62.4.2: *praeter quantitatem propriam nostram eorum quoque summulas significavi*; *Ep.* 7.2: *quae quantitas ne forte iam universa erogata sit*; *De op. et eleem.* 25 CCL 3A.71: *domicilia . . . et praedia venundabant et dispensandam pauperibus quantitatem . . . obferebant*; and cf. Renaud, *Eucharistie* 274 f. They fail to mention Quirinus, the other contributor of the alms (*Epp.* 77.3.2, 78.3.1).

5. *dignatus es de verbis caelestibus nos tamquam filios confortare*. It is tempting to interpret the obscurely turned phrase *de verbis caelestibus* as meaning "by means of the words of heaven," i.e. by means of the biblical citations so freely given in *Ep.* 76 (nine direct quotations) and liberally expatiated upon for their solace and exhortation. But the flattering tone should probably indicate that the reference is rather to Cyprian's own heavenly (i.e. inspired) utterances, voiced, as martyr-to-be, in his epistle; cf. *Ep.* 78.2.2: *prophetiam quam litteris tuis spiritu sancto plenus spopondisti*, and *Ep.* 10 nn. 19 and 20.

6. *ut nos . . . in mente habere digneris*. For this phrasing (?a liturgical formula) see *Ep.* 78 n. 9 and *Ep.* 62 n. 12.

7. [*Felix scripsi*]. *Iader subscripsi*. *Polianus legi*. We have a letter apparently written out by Felix (the *scriptor*) to which Iader and then Polianus appended, as commonly, endorsing *subscriptiones* (addenda often, however, discarded in the subsequent ms. traditions but here retained, though the authority for reading *Felix scripsi* is weakly preserved). See further, on such *subscriptiones*, *Ep.* 9 n. 16, *Ep.* 30 intro., *Ep.* 49 n. 9 (to which add J. D. Thomas, in *Egypt in the Hellenistic World* 369 ff.); and for additional parallels note the Testament of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, of which Meletius was the *scriptor* and to

which the martyrs attached elaborate subscriptions and salutations (§3, Musurillo 358 ff.), and Aug. *Epp.* 128 and 129, which have come down to us with some closely parallel subscriptions attached, CSEL 44.34, 39.

8. *Dominum meum Eutychianum saluto*. This appears to be a message added by the last signatory, Polianus. Can we assume that Eutychianus is in exile with Cyprian; or is Cyprian being merely asked to pass on greetings to him (there happens to be a bishop Eutychianus, a fellow Numidian, *Ep.* 70 *init.*)? We cannot tell whether *dominus* is here used with any more significance than its common function as a title of courtesy: see *Epp.* 21 n. 2 and 77 n. 14.

LETTER 80

Contents: Cyprian writes to warn Bishop Successus of coming persecution. His informants have reported back from Rome word of a rescript from Valerian which prescribes immediate capital punishment for bishops, presbyters, and deacons; confiscations and loss of status for senators and equestrians (with capital punishment for persistence); exile and loss of property for matrons; forfeiture of personal possessions and hard labour for *Caesariani*. Copies of these orders have gone out to the provinces also; they are expected to arrive any day. Already, in Rome, Pope Sixtus along with four deacons has been put to death and the authorities there are pressing on with the orders, with confiscations and condemnations. Successus is asked to spread the news to other bishops so that all may be in readiness for the coming spiritual contest.

Date and circumstances: The letter must be dated after August 6, 258 (§1.4)—events of that day in Rome can be reported—but before September 13, the day Cyprian was arrested (*Act. procons. Cyp.* 2.2 Musurillo 170). The impression one gets (it is no stronger than that) is that the fateful tidings of August 6 had come posthaste to Cyprian, though he is also able to say that the orders of the rescript are being vigorously executed in Rome generally. He will have written this letter as soon as the news from Rome had made their own position clear

(§1.1). It looks as if we ought to allow a whole month of nerve-racking waiting between Cyprian's receipt of this warning news and his eventual arrest (cf. n. 13 below). In all probability Cyprian is writing, under house detention, from his suburban *horti* (see n. 2 below), in about mid-August 258.

This letter constitutes a major source on the early persecutions, valuably documenting in detail the second stage of the Valerianic persecution (although to establish precisely under what circumstances and with what motivations the persecution was intensified is another matter: see intro. pp. 12 f.). All that needs to be said here is that the Senate—it would appear—had written to the emperor requesting guidance in dealing with prominently recalcitrant Christians (whether notables of the Church or of society and of Caesar's own household), whose ardour the earlier stage of the persecution had failed to dim. That suggests there were conscientious enemies of Christianity to be found within the conservative upper social circles of Rome; Valerian himself need have been no different. (Porphry *Vit. Plot.* 16 echoes the resentment felt at the spread of Christianity, and other outlandish sects, in contemporary Rome at the expense of the "old philosophy.") The virulence of this mood of hostility is reflected in orders which entailed the recall and retrial of clergy already sentenced under the first stage (thus the African bishops Agapius and Secundinus brought back from exile to their execution, *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 2.5 ff. Musurillo 196 ff., as likewise Cyprian himself), or harsher treatment for already confessed (and presumably sentenced) *Caesariani* (§1.2: *quicumque vel prius confessi fuerant*). But the most devastating illustration of the violent change in temper comes with the stark news of the execution on the spot of Pope Sixtus and four of his deacons at the cemetery of Callistus in Rome (§1.4). This heralds the bloodiest persecution known before the days of Diocletian. (For a list of African episcopal victims, Saxer, *Saints anciens d'Afrique* 16 f.; for commentary, Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.80 ff., 135 ff.; for other catalogues of known Valerianic victims, de Moreau, *Nouv. rev. théol.* 73 [1951] 824 f., Paschini, *Stud. rom.* 6 [1958] 135 f.). Circumstances for Christians in Rome during the first stage of the persecution are not known in any detail, but some earlier panic at reprisals and apprehension at the seizure of church property *might* be surmised from the (often hypothesised) translation, for safekeeping, of the relics of Peter

and Paul from their *tropaea* to *ad catacumbas* on the Appian Way earlier this year (for analysis of the confused evidence and theories adduced, see O'Connor, *Peter in Rome*; the spate of literature continues unabated—for a further survey, Reekmans, *Att. IX Congr. inter. arch. crist.* 1975 [1978] 275 ff.).

As for Cyprian himself we need to appreciate that he has spent virtually a whole year now whether in exile or confined to his suburban estate, contemplating the close prospect of martyrdom and living (especially since his recall to Carthage) in rumored uncertainties (§1.1). We get a sense almost of relief that the period of uncertainty is soon to be over; the end so long contemplated is coming at last. It does not follow, however, that the information in this letter is largely a figment of Cyprian's perfervid impatience and heightened emotions (so, perversely, Saumagne, *Saint Cyprien* 174 ff., e.g. 181: "Celui-ci (= Second Edict) . . . n'a eu d'existence que dans les impatiences émotives de Cyprien"), nor that Cyprian is without his usual resourcefulness (witness his effective intelligence service in §1.1). The letter is briskly businesslike and factual, even though it announces news that is to mean Cyprian's own death—and that of his correspondent (see n. 1 below).

I have discussed the letter in greater detail in *Latomus* 34 (1975) 437 ff. (with further literature cited there) and note the helpful addenda to it by Frend, *Latomus* 36 (1977) 164 ff.; and see further intro. pp. 8 ff. on the persecution of Valerian.

1. *Cyprianus Successo fratri* s. Successus is a fellow African bishop (§2); the only contemporary bishop so named whose see is known to us comes from Abbir Germanicana, *Sent. episc.* 16. H. 443. Identity is likely, but even if rightly identified, the precise whereabouts of Successus' diocese still remains insecurely known. A location close to Carthage is an altogether probable supposition (= ? Henchir el Khandak): PW 1 (1894) s.v. "Abbir" (4) 21 (J. Schmidt); DHGE 1 (1912) s.v. "Abbir" 47 f. (A. Audollent); CIL 8 p. 102 (Wilmanns); Lepelley, *Les cités* 2.53 ff.

In the *Acta Montani et Lucii*, which record events in all likelihood of some nine months after this letter, in May of 259 (*Kalend. Carthag.*, x kal. Iun., DACL 8 [1928] s.v. "Kalendaria" 444 [H. Leclercq], and for discussion Monceaux, *Histoire* 2.168 f.) there appears as a leading

figure a Bishop Successus who has been recently martyred (*cum iam Successus et Paulus cum comitibus suis coronati fuissent*, 21.8 Musurillo 234). Furthermore, in the *codex Veronensis* there occurred annotation against the *sententia* of Bishop Successus in the *Sent. episc. LXXXVII* recording for him confession and eventual martyrdom (*conf. et post. mart. positus in Tertulli*): Mercati, *Studi e testi* 77 (1937) 180; von Soden, *Nachrichten . . . Göttingen phil.-hist. Klasse* 1909.3, 300 ff.; Delehaye, *Origines* 382.

It looks as if this Bishop Successus was himself to undergo confession and martyrdom within a few months of this correspondence with Cyprian (his name figuring in the martyrologies under January 18, *Mart. hier.*, *xv kal. Febr.*: in *Africa . . . Successi* ML 30.440). Successus has appeared earlier as a fairly senior bishop in *Ep.* 57 (ninth place), *Ep.* 67 (seventh place), *Ep.* 70 (eleventh place).

It would seem that Successus had written to Cyprian requesting confirmation of rumored dangers; hence Cyprian starts off by apologising for the delays in writing to him.

See further on Successus Maier, *L'épiscopat* 96, 423; von Soden, *Prosopographie* 259, Monceaux; *Histoire* 2.167.

2. *universi clerici sub ictu agonis constituti recedere istinc omnino non poterant*. What has changed which enables Cyprian now, but not previously, to despatch this letter? This letter goes on to reveal that the rumored threats under which their Christian community has been labouring have now become clarified and that, specifically, the lower clergy are now known not to be endangered. Cyprian has become, therefore, in a position to entrust this letter to the hands of a clerical messenger. His insistence, which is implied, that ecclesiastical correspondence must be delivered by *clerici*, even under these desperate conditions, is remarkable; on which see *Ep.* 29 intro.

One gets the impression that rumour had given out that the whole of the Carthaginian clergy was mortally imperilled; and that Cyprian, along with his assembled *clerus*, had been watching and praying together awaiting the end. None could safely travel. It would be more realistic, therefore, if *istinc* here were to refer to Carthage, rather than to Curubis (on which see *Ep.* 76 intro. and n. 3), and that is the clear impression one gets from Pontius' narrative of Cyprian's whereabouts when he gets news about Sixtus, in *Vit. Cyp.* 14 f. H. CV f. Indeed, Cyprian's recall from Curubis to his *borti* in Carthage

(*Ep.* 81.1.1, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 2.1 Musurillo 170, cf. *Pont. Vit. Cyp.* 15 H. CVI) there to await, under house arrest, the advent of the proconsul coming on his assize rounds, may have served to exacerbate the very rumours and apprehensions. In any event, Successus is in a better position than Cyprian to spread the warning news (§2 below).

3. *parati omnes pro animi sui devotione ad divinam et caelestem gloriam*. Even in so hasty a note Cyprian takes the trouble to underline the courageous faith which his clergy have displayed, without exception: the contrast with past conduct under Decius is sharp (e.g. *Epp.* 14.1.1, 34.4.1). For *gloriam* there occurs the more obvious variant reading *coronam*.

4. *eos venisse quos ad urbem propter hoc miseram, ut quomodocumque de nobis rescriptum fuisset, exploratam veritatem ad nos perferrent*. A remarkable display of confidence in the Christian intelligence services of Rome (relying, perhaps, on Christians among the *Caesariani* of the imperial bureaux—see n. 10 below). (Note, too, the early-warning system that reaches Cyprian in Carthage, from the proconsul's entourage at Utica, *Ep.* 81.1.1). However, if *rescriptum* is here used, as it seems to be, in its technical sense, of imperial *responsum* to a legal inquiry—see e.g., Wilcken, *Hermes* 55 (1920) 1 ff.; PW 6 (1909) s.v. "Epistula" 204 ff. (Brassloff); PW 13 (1927) s.v. "Libellus" 34 ff. (von Premerstein); Schnebelt, *Reskripte der Soldatenkaiser*, esp. 11 ff.; T. Honoré, *JRS* 69 (1979) 51 ff.—then it would follow that the inquiring body, the Senate (cf. §1.2: *rescripsisse Valerianum ad senatum*) had formally moved to write over to Valerian, now in the East, concerning the treatment of (publicly visible and intractable?) Christians. That would be a notorious fact rendered public by the *acta senatus* (published Senatorial proceedings) or by the issues of the *acta diurna* (city gazette), and made further accessible to the Christian community via any Christian senators (see n. 7 below). Valerian's reply or *rescriptum* would be long-awaited—it would be wise to gauge an interval of several months between original senatorial despatch and receipt of the response; Christian nervousness and anxious rumours would be understandable. When Valerian's letter eventually arrived, it would be formally read out before the Senate (hence *oratio*, n. 11 below) and be similarly recorded for general information: its terms (here summarily reported) would also be publicly posted in the City.

It is worth observing that up to Ulpian's day—in the earlier part

of this century—the standard method of dealing with the Christian question had been characteristically by issuing imperial *rescripta*: Ulpian's collection of *poenae* appropriate for confessed Christians consisted of *rescripta principum nefaria*, Lact. *Div. inst.* 5.11.19 SC 204.186.

5. *rescripsisse Valerianum ad senatum*. Valerian, in 258, is last heard of for sure at Antioch in May, *Cod. Just.* 5.3.5. (May 1) cf. 9.9.8 (May 15) (see e.g. Downey, *History of Antioch* 259 f.; de Blois, *Talanta* 6 [1975] 7 ff., on Valerian's movements). Gallienus is occupied on the northern frontiers (see e.g. Salamon, *Eos* 59 [1971] 109 ff.; Willger, *Studien* 50 ff.; Mócsy, *ANRW* 2.6 [1977] 564 ff.). When the proconsul in Carthage appeals to his copy of the imperial orders, he invokes the commands of (plural) "the most sacred emperors" (*iusserunt te sacratissimi imperatores caeremoniari*, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 3.4 Musurillo 172), and he goes on to cite by name Valerian's imperial colleagues, Gallienus, as *Augustus*, and Valerianus as *nobilissimus Caesar* (*Act. procons. Cyp.* 4.1 Musurillo 172). I very much doubt whether that has to mean, however, that any formal consultation has occurred with them before Valerian despatched this rescript. The evidence this passage provides for the continued functioning of the Roman Senate is invaluable: if the terms of the rescript are any guide, the conscript fathers may well have been concerned with persistent Christians within their own governing ranks and Caesar's household, along with their spiritual leaders. This will not be the last time that the Roman establishment families show themselves as conservative upholders of the old religious traditions.

6. *ut episcopi et presbyteri et diacones in continenti animadvertantur*. The significance of *animadverto* is rendered explicit by §1.4 below (*Xistum . . . in cimiterio animadversum sciatis*; cf. *ibid.*: *si qui . . . oblati fuerint animadvertantur*): the word is echoed in the verdict of *Act. procons. Cyp.* 4.3 Musurillo 172 (*Thascium Cyprianum gladio animadverto placet*), compare *Ep.* 66.7.2 (*episcopi qui quibusdam locis animadversi caelestes coronas . . . sumpserunt*, and for more detailed explication, Mommsen, *Römisches Strafrecht* 911 n. 1, 924 n. 3; P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Röm. Quart.* 14 (1900) 159 ff. = *Scritti agiograf.* 1 (1962) 383 ff., cf. *idem.*, *Studi e testi* 65 (1935) 142 n. 5. The summary powers of execution of upper clergy granted by this clause is dramatically illustrated in the verbal exchange in the *Act. Fructuosi* between the

bishop (Fructuosus) and the governor (Aemilianus) in January 259 (A: *Episcopus es?* F: *sum.* A: *Fuisti*, *Act. Fruct.* 2.8 f. Musurillo 178). But while individual church leaders might be singled out for exemplary execution by virtue of this injunction (thus Cyprian, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 4.2 f. Musurillo 172), prompt and wholesale slaughter of the *clerus* did not necessarily everywhere ensue if the *Acta* are any guide (e.g. Carthaginian deacons and at least one [named] presbyter openly in attendance upon Cyprian at his execution, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 5.3 ff., Musurillo 174; at Lambaesis before the governor, judgment on members of the *clerus* is in fact deliberately reserved, *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 10.1 ff. Musurillo 208). In Rome, however, within a period of four days, the bishop, all his seven deacons, and a presbyter (as well as a lector and a doorkeeper), from among the Roman clergy, were dead (see n. 13 below); that may indicate the special virulence of local Roman feeling.

The effect of this clause is observable in the *Acta*: it is felt important to establish credentials as a cleric in one of these three categories in order to secure martyrdom (hence *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 5.2 f. Musurillo 200: Marianus is a lector and his captors, apparently fearing he may escape punishment, torture him in order to make him repent—or confess himself a higher cleric. And Flavianus has to struggle to claim diaconal status in *Act. Mont. et Luc.* 12.3, 20.1 ff. Musurillo 224, 232).

7. *senatores vero et egregii viri et equites Romani dignitate amissa etiam bonis spoliuntur*. An important piece of evidence: the rescript envisages that there are Christians to be found within the highest classes of society, among senators and equestrians. (*Egregius vir* is virtually a technical term, used in referring to men of procuratorial rank, equestrian governors or the like, i.e. to the higher grades of equestrian officials. See Pflaum, *Titulature et rang social* 177 f.; Callu, *Politique monétaire* 144 n. 2, and cf. Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 14 H. CV: *conveniebant interim plures egregii et clarissimi ordinis et sanguinis*). For a survey of such meagre evidence as there does survive for the presence of Christians within these social categories by this date, see *The Octavius of Marcus Minucius Felix* (ACW 39) intro. 32 ff., along with Eck, *Chiron* 1 (1971) 381 ff., and Eck, *Chiron* 9 (1979) 449 ff. (the latter on equestrian officials).

Note that loss of status and property (profoundly disgraceful in a tightly stratified and timocratically organized society), rather than

immediate loss of life, is envisaged, in the first instance, for Christians in these classes: the aim is to put pressure on them to recant rather than to turn them without fail into martyrs. Many have seen the confiscations as the overriding motivation behind the rescript, for a government hard pressed by financial exigencies (so e.g. Grégoire, *Persécutions* 48 ff.; Kuhoff, *Herrsbertum* 14 f.); but confiscation of personal *bona* was standard procedure in the punishment of *animadversio* (e.g. *Dig.* 48.20.6 ff., cf. *Dig.* 49.14. 45.2, 11; Euseb. *H.E.* 6.2.12, etc., and see PW Supp. 10 [1965] s.v. "bona damnatorum" 96 ff., esp. 107 ff. [W. Waldstein]); and even Dionysius of Alexandria in making (tendentiously) the discredited Macrianus, Valerian's *a rationibus* no less, the chief instigator of the persecution, gives him religious, not economic, designs (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7.10.4 f.). See further G. T. Osborn, "Economic Factors" 145 f.

8. *si . . . christiani [esse] perseveraverint, capite quoque multentur*. In Roman law loss of *caput* need not necessarily entail the death penalty but rather loss of citizen rights; exile (especially in the cases of *bonestiores*) might be the form of capital punishment involved (as with the *matronae* who follow). For the rare case of a known Christian equestrian layman imprisoned and apparently beheaded in this persecution, *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 8–10 Musurillo 204 ff. (by name, Aemilianus).

9. *matronae ademptis bonis in exilium relegentur*. The somewhat tougher conditions imposed upon the women of superior rank is noticeable: they are to be given no opportunity to relent before suffering exile, unlike their male counterparts, who precede. On the imprecision of the language here (is their penalty, technically, *relegatio* or *exilium*?), compare *Ep.* 76 n. 3 and see further *Ep.* 10 n. 5.

10. *Caesariani . . . confiscentur et vincti in Caesarianas possessiones descripti mittantur*. In the First Edict of the Great Persecution Diocletian (Euseb. *H.E.* 8.2.4) proclaimed that members of his domestic staff (*tous d'en oiketiais*), if they persisted in the profession of Christianity, would be deprived of their freedom; *Caesariani* here seem to be treated similarly. In all likelihood, they would be characteristically (but by no means necessarily all) imperial freedmen for whom enslavement (*vincti*) and confinement with hard labour (*in Caesarianas possessiones descripti*) were appropriate penalties. They might range from junior clerks and palatine officials to powerful functionaries in

the great imperial bureaus. If Caesar wished others to comply with his rescript, he must clearly be seen to be setting his own household in order. On the term *Caesarianus* see Jones JRS 39 (1949) 46 = *Studies* 164 f.; Chantraine, *Freigelassene und Sklaven* 279 f.; Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 26; and for a contemporary use of the word (under Philip) IGRR 4.598.27 (Japuldschan). Not inconsiderable personal property (now to be sequestered) could be involved: see e.g. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris*, esp. 282 ff. Notoriously, Dionysius of Alexandria was prepared to go so far as to assert, of Valerian's house, that it "had been filled with godly persons and was a church of God," *ap. Euseb. H.E.* 7.10.3, but there are remarkably few examples to substantiate this (propagandistic) assertion. For the main candidates see Harnack, *Expansion* (ET) 2 (1905) 199 ff.; Instinsky, *Marcus Aurelius Prosenes* 10 ff.; and my survey in *The Octavius of Marcus Minucius Felix* (ACW 39) intro. 39 ff., adding *Antichtbon* 1 (1967) 45 ff.

The present passage suggests that *Caesariani* who had earlier confessed had in fact been treated more leniently (*quicumque vel prius confessi fuerant*)—or that their cases had prudently been adjourned, awaiting guidance on the appropriate *poena*, to be laid down by their imperial *dominus* or *patronus* (solicited in the senatorial inquiry?).

11. *subiecit etiam Valerianus imperator orationi suae*. Note the technical term *oratio*: the emperor's despatch was formally read out in the Senate (by a quaestor, Tac. *Ann.* 16.27.2, Suet. *Nero* 15.2, Dig. 1.13.1.4 [Ulp.]); hence *oratio* (*principis*) becomes a word for an imperial decree technically promulgated via the Senate—or even independently (a variant for *edictum*). In the present case, might we presume the legal ceremonial of endorsing the *oratio* as a formal *senatus consultum*? Valerian might be anxious to secure the solidarity of the senatorial class behind the programme of intensified persecution, for members of its own ranks, it was anticipated, could be involved. (For what it is worth, the author of *H.A. Prob.* envisages that Probus, in his programmatic *oratio* to the Senate, at the beginning of his reign, graciously conceded to the Senate the power to confirm by its own senatorial decrees laws published by the emperor—*secunda oratione permisit patribus ut . . . leges quas Probus ederet senatus consultis propriis consecrarent*, 13.1). On *oratio* (*principis*), see Mommsen, *Staatsrecht* 2³.899; Hammond, *Antonine Monarchy* 334 ff. (with notes, 355 ff.);

Jolowicz, *Historical Introduction* 374; Talbert, *The Senate* 294 ff., 435 ff.

12. *exemplum litterarum quas ad praesides provinciarum de nobis fecit*. If it was the case that the Senate adopted Valerian's *oratio* as a decree, the formality of such an act is clear: Valerian appended a copy of the orders already despatched, independently, to the provincial governors. Cyprian understands that this is to be universal persecution. It is by now, of course, no novelty for an emperor openly to issue general instructions which include senatorial proconsuls (as in Africa Proconsularis) e.g. *Dig.* 47.11.6 pr., 48.3.10, 48.19.27.1-2. On the issuing of imperial *sacrae litterae* see Dell'Oro, "*Mandata*" e "*Litterae*" 79 ff. (with *exempla litterarum* 82 ff.).

13. *quas litteras cotidie speramus venire*. These long days of anxious waiting are echoed both in Pontius *Vit. Cyp.* 14 H. CV: *sperabatur iam iamque carnifex veniens . . . et sic erant omnes dies illi quotidiana expectatione moriendi*, and in the *Acta procons. Cyp.* 2.1 Musurillo 170: *et inde cotidie sperabat veniri ad se sicut ostensum illi erat*.

14. *Xistum autem in cimiterio animadversum sciatis VIII id. Aug. die*. In this section Cyprian appears to be illustrating the dramatic effects that the new orders have had on the Christian clergy and notables in Rome; there can be no doubt of the bloody realities that are to be expected in Africa. The date mentioned (Aug. 6) could fix the despatch of news from Rome to almost immediately afterwards, for it sounds as if the deaths of Lawrence and his companions (among others), which occurred four days later, were not yet known to Cyprian's informants (*et post passionem beati Xysti, post tertia die, passus est beatus Laurentius eius archidiaconus VIII id. aug. et subdiaconus Claudius et Severus presbiter et Crescentius lector et Romanus ostiarius, Lib. pontif. ed. Duchesne* 155), but see n. 17 below.

The passage raises a number of problems. (i) *in cimiterio*. There should be little room for dispute that this refers to *the* Christian cemetery in Rome par excellence, viz. that of Callistus. For Sixtus buried in *Callisti* note *Depositio martyrum*, Aug. 6 (*Xysti in Callisti*), Mommsen, MGH. 9.71; Damasus *Epig.* 12 (ed. Ihm) with actual fragments surviving in the papal crypt at Callistus' (see, most conveniently, Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana* 123 ff., and ICUR 4.9514), and cf. *Lib. pontif. ed. Duchesne* 155: *qui vero sepultus est in cymiterio Calisti, via Appia*, and the abundant evidence of his cultus

there, ILCV 2324. That is overwhelming convergence of literary and archeological testimony. For further (lengthy) discussion on the location of Sixtus' death *in Callisti* see DACL 15 (1950) *s.v.* "Sixte ii" 1505 ff. (H. Leclercq).

For this present use of *cimiterium*, without qualification, for referring to the cemetery of Callistus, compare Hippol. *Philos.* 9.12.14 GCS 26.3.248 (*to koimētērion*), and for further evidence DACL 2 (1910) *s.v.* "Calliste (cimitière de)" 1692 ff. (H. Leclercq); Février, *Cahiers archéologiques* 11 (1960) 11; and on the third-century use of the word generally (not exclusively Christian) see Testini, *Le catacombe* 83 f., and more generally RAC 3 (1957) *s.v.* "coemeterium" 231 ff. (J. Kollowitz).

Some, however, have posited the catacomb of *Praetextatus* as the scene for Sixtus' execution (with later *depositio* in Callistus): this case rests basically on the evidence of graffiti in that catacomb—a named painting of Sustus, a *graffito* of a *cathedra*, an unnamed doctor seated on *cathedra* with hearer. The weight of that evidence is, however, adequately counterbalanced by the widespread cultus of Sixtus throughout Rome, with invocations to his name and commemorations of him found widely distributed generally and in other cemeteries as well (see ILCV index nominum *s.v.* "Xystus"). For the case, de Rossi, *La Roma sotterranea* 2.89 ff.; and further discussion, H. Stuart Jones, JTS 13 (1911/12) 600 f.; Corssen, ZNTW 16 (1915) 147 ff.; Schaefer, *Ephem. liturg.* 46 (1932) 175 ff.; Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sixtus* 130 ff.; Delehaye, AB 51 (1933) 43 ff.; Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Studi e testi* 24 (1912) 122 f., and idem, *Note agiografiche* 6 (1920) 147 ff. (= *Studi e testi* 33); Ferrua in *Miscellanea Giulio Belvederi* (1954–55), 280 ff. At the least, Cyprian understood the event to have occurred *in Callisti*, by ecclesiastical habit annotating precise date and place of martyrdom (for the purposes of anniversary commemorations, on which see *Ep.* 12 nn. 12 and 15).

(ii) *in cimiterio animadversum*. But how are we to envisage that event *in cimiterio*? The new proscription allowed powers of summary execution in the case of higher grade clerics (§1.2); it is realistic to imagine that Sixtus was surprised by a raid upon the cemetery (there in hiding, after the promulgation of the new rescript?) and that after his identity and status had been formally ascertained he was promptly executed on the spot where he had been discovered. For

what it is worth, that picture accords with the memory of some later traditions: men recalled that Sixtus was preaching, as a model bishop, from his *cathedra* when he was struck down, offering up his life to defend his flock, and his throne was to be seen there *in situ* for later pilgrims to venerate (see Damasus *Epig.* 13 ed. Ihm.; de Rossi, *La Roma sotterranea* 2.89 ff.). On these legendary accounts generally (of which there are variants), Corssen, ZNTW 16 (1915) 147 ff., and for the view that Sixtus' trial would have been in fact held elsewhere, Benson 491, Healy, *Valerian Persecution* 178 f. Younge, *Cyprian of Carthage* 66, wrongly claims this letter as the source for the information that "soldiers burst in upon the bishop as he presided over the Eucharist. . . ." Pontius Vit. *Cyp.* 14 H. CV records the arrival of this stunning news: *iam de Xisto bono et pacifico sacerdote ac propterea martyre ab urbe nuntius venerat.*

In the present brusque and hasty note it is pressing matters too far, as does H. Lietzmann, *A History of the Early Church* (ET) 2.237, to deduce from the fact that Cyprian records Sixtus' death "without using any affectionate tone suggesting fraternal peace" that Cyprian and Sixtus remained on hostile terms (over the baptismal question). Sixtus is in fact the only Roman pope—apart from Peter—to have found a place in the Carthaginian Calendar (*VIII idus ag. sancti Systi episcopi et martyris Romae*, DACL 8 (1928) s.v. "Kalendaria" 644 [H. Leclercq]). The unadorned notice is effectively eloquent in its baldness.

15. *et cum eo diacones quattuor.* The implication is clear: Cyprian understood *four* deacons to have been executed along with Sixtus *in Callisti*. However, the *Liber pontificalis* (ed. Duchesne 155) records that *six* deacons died with Sixtus (*cum eo alii sex diaconi, Felicissimus et Agapitus, Ianuarius, Magnus, Vincentius et Stephanus*) and the document goes on to note that they were buried *in Praetextati* (*nam VI diacones supradicti sepulti sunt in cimiterio Praetextati, via Appia*). That appears to constitute a head-on conflict of evidence. There is, however, a classic egress from this impasse. The deacons seem to occur in the *Liber pontificalis* (a document eminently prone to confusions) in two groups, and the first group (the pair Felicissimus and Agapitus) undoubtedly were associated with *Praetextatus*. For their burial there, *Depositio mart.* Aug. 6 (*et in Praetextati Agapiti et Felicissimi*), Mommsen MGH 9.71; the epigram of Da-

masus, *Epig.* 23 ed. Ihm, commemorating their glorious deaths, has been found *in situ* in Praetextatus' (= ILCV 1987, ICUR 5.13872); and for the ninth-century translation of their bodies from Praetextatus', Delehayé, AB 54 (1936) 285 f. with further evidence of their cultus in that catacomb in DACL 14 (1948) s.v. "*Prétextat (catacomb de)*" 1754 ff. (H. Leclercq), 5 (1923) s.v. "*Félicissime et Agapit*" 1249 ff. (H. Leclercq), ICUR 5.13876, 13877, 13878, 14115. That leaves the second group of four deacons (Januarius, Magnus, Vincentius, and Stephanus) free to be prised off, moved from Praetextatus', and identified with Cyprian's four companions of Sixtus in *Callisti*. By a further exercise of imagination they can be identified with the martyred companions of Sixtus who are commemorated in Damasus *Epig.* 12.4 ed. Ihm, of which large fragments have been found in the papal crypt in *Callisti* (= ILCV 1986, ICUR 4.9513): *hic comites Xysti, portant qui ex hoste tropaea*. At least Damasus provides evidence that the memory remained firm that Sixtus died along with some martyred companions. On all this see my article in *Latomus* 34 (1975) 437 ff.

16. *sed et huic persecutioni cotidie insistent praefecti in urbe*. Cyprian's phrasing seems nonspecific: by *praefecti in urbe* he is referring to the civil authorities in Rome responsible for the executions and exactions. Some, however, have attempted to interpret the phrase more precisely. Chastagnol e.g., *La préfecture urbaine* 141, takes this as an unequivocal reference to the urban prefect; and given the powers and known practices of the urban prefecture (with ample parallels for his court involved in the trial of Roman Christians, Chastagnol, *ibid.* 141 ff.; Freis, *Die cohortes urbanae* 23 ff.; Lopuszanski, *Ant. Class.* 20 [1951] 5 ff.), then we could reasonably anticipate involvement of the urban prefect in the cases consequent upon this new rescript. But the turn of phrase here, with its plural (*praefecti in urbe* as opposed to *praefectus urbis* or *praefectus urbi*), does make it altogether unlikely that Cyprian intends to refer to the urban prefect alone. It might be possible to explain the plural as a reference to the urban prefect and his deputies (*vicarii*) who were helping the prefect sift through the mass of cases engendered by the new legislation (on such vice-prefects see Vitucci, *Ricerche sulla Praefectura Urbi* 108 ff.), but I can find no verbal parallel for Cyprian's phrase in this sense nor for Mommsen's variant interpretation (*Römisch. Staatsrecht* 274 n. 4) that *praefecti in urbe* here is the

equivalent of the urban prefect and his *consilium*. The urban prefect at this date was P. Cornelius Saecularis (PIR² C 1432; Barbieri, *L'albo* 1542).

Others have seen a reference to the involvement of the praetorian prefects (or their *vices agentes* in Rome), e.g. Vigneaux, *Essai sur l'histoire de la prefectura urbis* 248 n. 1; Howe, *The Praetorian Prefect* 55 n. 50; Ensslin in PW 22 (1954) s.v. "Praefectus Praetorio" 2416; and given their function as imperial deputies (especially in cases involving *Caesariani* and military offenders) it would not be surprising if the court of the praetorian prefecture were caught up in the spate of trials as well as that of the urban prefecture: that could help to explain Cyprian's nonspecific plural *praefecti in urbe*.

The case for any involvement of the *praefectus vigillum* is much weaker but it has sometimes been made (e.g. Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Note agiografiche* 6 (1920) 176 = *Studi e testi* 33). Under most circumstances, however, he would not deal with capital cases, much less with cases involving *honestiores* (as Cyprian represents his *praefecti in urbe* as doing), but he could be involved in the police work of searching out fugitive recusants. (Of course the *praefectus* of the imperial fisc would also become involved, by dealing with the *bona damnatorum*: see Millar, JRS 53 [1963] 36 f.).

For these possibilities discussed in greater detail, see my article in *Latomus* 34 (1975) 446 ff.

17. *ut si qui sibi oblati fuerint animadvertantur et bona eorum fisco vindicentur*. Cyprian's summary stresses the harsh realities of the new orders; for effective emphasis he combines the two prime instruments of punishment which they enjoined, viz. *animadversio* (used of the clergy) and *confiscatio* (imposed upon the other categories). His phrasing suggests that he may have had word of further cases of clerical executions (e.g. the deacons Felicissimus and Agapitus—see n. 15 above) as well as of punitive action and exactions imposed upon prominent Christian layfolk or *Caesariani* (like, say, the Agnes of Ambros. *De virgin. ad Marcellin.* 1.2. ML 16.200 ff., *De off.* 1.4 ML 16.90; Prudent. *Peristeph.* 14; Damasus *Epig.* 40 ed. Ihm; Frend, *Latomus* 36 [1977] 167 f.; or the palatine *cubicularii* Parthenius and Calocerus, see de Gaiffier, AB 75 [1957] 30 f., DACL 13 [1938] s.v. "Parthénius et Calocérus" 2244 ff. [H. Leclercq]—all being of highly dubious historicity, however). Though it is nowhere explicitly stated, condem-

nation of the clergy presumably entailed confiscation of their personal *bona* also.

J. E. G. Whitehorne, ZPE 24 (1977) 187 ff., adduces the very fragmentary *P. Oxy.* 43. 3119 for evidence of consequential scrutiny of and exactions upon Christians (*eksetasis*) in Egypt (cf. Judge and Pickering, JAC 20 [1977] 59); similarly David, *Ant. afric.* 11 (1977) 149 ff., esp. 157 ff., adduces CIL 8.2757 for evidence of increased exactions in Numidia (less persuasive).

18. *singuli ex nostris*. For this (relatively rare) use in Cyprian of *nostris* (= our brethren) see *Ep.* 17 n. 10 and cf. *Ep.* 77 n. 16.

LETTER 81

Contents: Cyprian explains why he has withdrawn temporarily from his estate in Carthage. Agents had been sent to arrest him and take him to Utica. But it is proper for a bishop to make his confession of faith in the midst of his own people, for thus they will become partakers in the glory of martyrdom with him. He will wait, therefore, in hiding until the proconsul reaches Carthage and then appear for his trial. For their own part, they must remain calm; they must not offer themselves up of their own volition, but if anyone should be arrested, then is the time for him to speak out, instructed by the Lord as He has promised.

Date and circumstances: Cyprian was arrested on Sept. 13, 258. It is reasonable to surmise that his period in hiding (here announced) was not of any significant duration: his contemporary biographer was able to pass by the episode in silence, indeed with conscious rejection ('He would perhaps have withdrawn at that time, as he was urged to do by many of the faithful also, if he had been so commanded by divine orders,' Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 14 H. CVI). This letter should, therefore, be written somewhere within a few weeks of the date of his arrest (but after the mid-August timing of *Ep.* 80: Cyprian, and his people, seem fully apprised of what the persecution holds in store). It is a moving document as the last letter we have from Cyprian's pen. Through it we are made aware of the long meditation with which

Cyprian has contemplated that memorable scene he is to enact among his people. One may even be tempted to use the verb “stage-manage” in this context, but that smacks of empty theatricality. The letter discloses for us a Cyprian profoundly conscious, as always, of his duties as episcopal leader appointed by God’s will. Now, in addition, he has also been cast to play the role of destined martyr and inspired witness to the faith: this letter can leave us in no doubt that Cyprian was a man with an intense, personal belief in the life of the Spirit (cf. n. 5 below). The dignity with which he rose to that part of episcopal martyr is no less moving for having been so consciously planned (as this letter indicates); it is well conveyed in the spare details of the proconsular *Acta*. Cyprian’s contriving not just to die for his faith but in so dying to bequeath to others a model of the Christian *nobile letum* was—and continues to be—a triumphant success. He had practised what he had preached.

1. *Cyprianus presbyteris et diaconis et plebi universae* s. In the surviving correspondence Cyprian has not had occasion to pen such an address since *Ep.* 40, written during the Decian persecution, going on for eight years ago (cf. *Ep.* 43 directed *plebi universae*). It would be reasonable, however, to assume some correspondence (now lost) similarly addressed to Cyprian’s congregation, written during the last year (257–58) from Curubis (cf. *Pont. Vit. Cyp.* 14 H. CVI on Cyprian’s energetic and constant exhortations over this period: *ille servos Dei, prout dabatur occasio, exhortationibus dominicis instruebat . . . tanta illi fuit cupido sermonis . . .*). If Christians were still denied the right of assembly (as they were by the first Valerianic edict, e.g. *Act. procons. Cyp.* 1.7 Musurillo 170: *ne in aliquibus locis conciliabula faciant*), then we shall need to assume that clerical messengers distributed copies of this letter around Carthage which were passed on from one Christian household to another. On the form of the address see also *Ep.* 38 n. 1.

2. *commentarios esse missos qui me . . . perducerent*. Hartel reads *commentarios*, apparently used in the sense of court clerks, prison clerks (= policemen); in this sense TLL s.v. “commentarius” A2b can cite but one other (suspect) example (Ps. Ambros. *Act. Seb. mart.* 46 ML 17.1133: *iussit eum recipi a commentariis*), cf. Watson 299. The variant reading *frumentarios* (witnessed by the late *codex Monacensis*, Har-

tel XLVI f.) becomes, therefore, also an attractive reading: AE 1918. 57 11.45 ff. (Carthage) in fact attests a proconsul in Carthage with five *frumentarii* on his staff, and cf. Dionys. Alex. *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 6.40.2 (a *frumentarius* sent to arrest Dionysius upon the arrival of Decius' orders in Alexandria). Paschoud, *Bonner Hist.-Aug.-Colloquium* 1979/1981 223, argues strongly that the correct reading should in fact be *commentarienses*. In either case, we are dealing with officials on the staff of the proconsular governor: Cyprian was eventually arrested by *principes duo* (one a *strator*, the other an *equistrator a custodiis*), both belonging to the proconsul's *officium*, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 2.2 Musurillo 170—in Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 15 H. CVI they are described as *cum militibus suis princeps*; and he was executed by a *speculator*, *Act. procons. Cyp.* 5.4 Musurillo 174. On these personnel at the disposal of the proconsul, Audollent, *Carthage* 338 ff., 351 ff. (cf. PW 17.2 [1937] s.v. "officium" 2045 ff. [Boak]), and on *frumentarii* generally see PW 7 (1912) s.v. "frumentarii" 122 ff. (Fiebiger), P. K. Baillie Reynolds, JRS 13 (1923) 183 ff., Lopuszanski, *Antiq. class.* 20 (1951) 22 f.; Claus, *Untersuchungen* 82 ff., esp. 101 ff. (on Christians and the soldiers who arrest them).

Note the advance-warning system: Cyprian appears to have friends and sympathisers in high places (cf. n. 4 below and *Ep.* 80 n. 4).

3. *qui me Uticam perducerent*. From §1.3 it is clear that the proconsul is at Utica (some 33 km. to the NW of Carthage), there hearing cases on his assize rounds. At the time of Cyprian's eventual arrest in Carthage, the proconsul is in ill-health, he speaks at Cyprian's trial with difficulty, and in fact dies a few days after Cyprian's execution (*Act. procons. Cyp.* 2.3, 4.1, 5.7 Musurillo 170, 172, 174). Cyprian may now be required to go the short journey to Utica because of the proconsul's failing health—or the proconsul may well wish to avoid precisely that highly emotive and spectacular martyr's scene in Carthage which Cyprian regards as a right and a duty (§1.2 below) and which he is soon to enact on Sept. 14 (*Act. procons. Cyp.* 5.1 ff. Musurillo 172 ff., cf. Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 16 ff. H. CVII ff.). Observe the evidence suggested for the regular timing of the proconsul's *conventus*: if the proconsul arrives in Carthage on the Ides of September, he should be at Utica during August. Half a century earlier Tert. *Ad Scap.* 3.3 CCL 2.1129 in fact bears witness to the proconsul holding

court at Utica during August, in 212 (to be precise, on Aug. 14). On this proconsular progress, G. P. Burton, JRS 65 (1975) 92 ff., esp. 96 (cf., for Asia, C. Habicht, JRS 65 [1975] 64 ff.). For what it is worth, later tradition placed the scene of the *Massa Candida* massacre at Utica and in August (*XV Kal. Sept.*) during this persecution, likewise the martyrdom of the bishop of Utica, named Quadratus, three days later. On *Massa Candida* DACL 10 (1932) s.v. "Massa Candida," 2649 ff. (H. Leclercq); on *Quadratus*, Delehay, AB 45 (1927) 318 ff.; Maier, *L'épiscopat* 393. There is a chance that memory has preserved (and garbled) traces of events that were taking place before the proconsul at Utica while Cyprian was writing this very letter, but the insistence in our sources that Cyprian was the protoepiscopal martyr of Africa is against it. See Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 19 H. CIX: *Cyprianus qui . . . sacerdotales coronas in Africa primus imbueret*; *Act. Mont. et Luc.* 21.3 Musurillo 234: *cum adhuc . . . episcopus noster* [sc. *Cyprianus*] *solus passus fuisset*; and cf. *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 6.10 ff. Musurillo 202; *Act. Mont. et Luc.* 21.3 Musurillo 234, emphasizing Cyprian's leadership role in martyrdom.

4. *consilio carissimorum persuasum esset ut de hortis nostris interim secederem.*

(1) *consilio carissimorum.* Pontius *Vit. Cyp.* 14 H. CV f. represents Cyprian at this time as being pressed to go into hiding not only by *plurimi et fideles* but also by old friends described as *plures egregii et clarissimi ordinis et sanguinis, sed et saeculi nobilitate generosi* (these constitute the present *carissimi*); but, Pontius continues, despite their urgent persuasions and even offers of suitable retreats, Cyprian remained deaf to all such worldly blandishments (*nec suadelis blandientibus adnuebat*). In other words, Pontius appears deliberately to pass over the (presumably brief) period of retreat which is the occasion for the present letter. The envious might construe such a retirement as a pusillanimous repetition of his Decian *fuga* (cf. *Epp.* 5 n. 2, 7 n. 2, 8 n. 4), the precise misconception which Cyprian is here attempting to forestall. Characteristically, Gibbon did not resist the occasion for malice: "the bishop of Carthage was sensible that he should be singled out for one of the first victims and the frailty of nature tempted him to withdraw himself, by a secret flight, from the danger and the honour of martyrdom." (Everyman ed. 2.31). The police agents having departed, cheated of their arrest, Cyprian pre-

sumably returned to his *horti*, for he was there to be found and arrested on September 13 (Pont. *Vit. Cyp.* 15 H. CVI; *Act. procons. Cyp.* 2.1 Musurillo 170).

For partial parallel note Polycarp "constrained by the affection and love of the brethren" secretly to leave Smyrna when he heard he was to be arrested. It was only after receiving a vision that he ceased to move from place to place and refused any longer to elude the police (Euseb. *H.E.* 4.15.11; *Mart. Polyc.* 5.1 f., 6.1, 7.1 Musurillo 4 ff.).

(2) *de hortis nostris*. Cyprian's use of the first person plural makes this all sound grandly seigneurial, but I wonder whether that may be a misreading. On first impressions Cyprian appears to use in this letter the first person singular and plural with almost dizzy randomness: *perlatum ad nos*; *me . . . perducerent*; *de hortis nostris*; *secederem*; *consensi*; *honor ecclesiae nostrae*; *ego episcopus . . . proficiscar*; *ego pro me . . . deprec*, *. . . exoptem et debeam*; *expectamus . . . audituri, . . . et dicturi*; *a me . . . accepistis*; *me tractante*; *Deus in nobis positus*; *qui nos confiteri . . . voluit*; *nos observare conveniat*; *in me . . . sententiam ferat*; *disponemus*. On closer inspection, however, the plurals can be explained either as generalizing (*Deus in nobis positus*) or as embracing others, whether the addressees of the letter (*honor ecclesiae nostrae*) or the *comites* who accompany Cyprian (*perlatum ad nos*; *expectamus* etc.). By *horti nostri*, therefore, Cyprian may well be wishing to indicate that he regards the *horti* more as communal property than as a private possession (perhaps used for gatherings of the brethren like the *villa* in *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 4.3 Musurillo 198, or the small suburban estate in *Mart. Polyc.* 5 Musurillo 4 ff.). We probably ought to conclude that Cyprian had, technically, been relegated (as opposed to exiled) in 257, if he retained formal ownership of this estate (see *Ep.* 76 n. 3). Cyprian's presence in his *horti* was clearly required, and expected by the authorities. He must be there under orders. As a person of notable rank and substance, prison was for him an inappropriate form of *custodia* (Garnsey, *Social Status* 71, 147 ff.), and contrast the exceptional treatment of Aemilianus in *Act. Marian. et Jacob.* 8.1 despite his equestrian rank (*namque Aemilianus quamvis equestris ordinis gentiliter haberetur unus tamen in carcere et ipse de fratribus*, Musurillo 204). In fact, some versions of Cyprian's *acta* state explicitly that Cyprian had been recalled from Cūrūbis and was staying on his Carthaginian estate *ex sacro rescripto* (or *praecepto*). Similarly Dionysius of Alexandria was re-

called from distant Cephro to Colluthion, closer to Alexandria in the Mareotic Nome (*ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 7. 11. 14 ff.), at about this same time. (M. Sordi in *Paradoxos politeia* 288 ff. speculates—unconvincingly—that P. Oxy. 3112 is connected with this transfer.) These *horti* of Cyprian's are a notorious puzzle (on the meaning of *horti* [= "suburban estates"] see *Letters of Cyprian* 1 [ACW 43] intro. n. 66; Pliny *N.H.* 19.50; Champlin, E., *Amer. Journ. Anct. Hist.* 7 [1982] 98 f.; and Shackleton Bailey's nn. on Cic. *Ad Att.* 7.7.6, 12.40.2). Pontius Vit. *Cyp.* 2 H. XCII records that upon his conversion Cyprian followed the evangelical counsel of perfection, sold what he had and gave it to the poor (*distractis rebus suis . . . tota prope pretia dispensans*: the text is suspect here, but Jerome at least was clear about the meaning: *omnem substantiam suam pauperibus erogavit*, *De viris illust.* 67 ML 23.714). Later, however, when reporting Cyprian's arrest at his *horti*, Pontius remarks obscurely, and defensively, that "these gardens, sold in the early days of his faith and restored by favour of God (*de Dei indulgentia*), he would most certainly have sold a second time for the benefit of the poor except he sought to avoid ill will consequent upon the persecution (*nisi invidiam de persecutione vitaret*)," Vit. *Cyp.* 15. H. CVI. By what mechanism the estate, once sold, was wonderfully restored to Cyprian *de Dei indulgentia* is a matter for the undisciplined imagination (e.g. a sympathetic purchaser bequeathed it back to its former owner). But an even more developed speculative ingenuity is required to make sense of the reasons proffered by Pontius for Cyprian's reluctance to resell. If *persecutio* does not mean here "legal prosecution" (which it could), are we to surmise that it would have roused popular *invidia* ostentatiously to sell the estate for the benefit of the Christian poor just before (as everyone knew) it was about to be confiscated for the benefit of the public treasury in *this* persecution (*Ep.* 80.1.2)?

I can find no ancient evidence for the assertion of Younger that "A subscription was subsequently taken up and his town house was purchased and returned to him for his personal use" [*Cyprian of Carthage* 12]; Countryman, *The Rich Christian* 187, conjectures that Cyprian turned his wealth over to the Church as a trust, retaining "a comfortable income for himself," so that when he was appointed bishop he became his own trustee and thus regained personal control of the Carthaginian gardens.

5. *quodcumque enim sub ipso confessionis momento confessor episcopus loquitur aspirante Deo . . . loquitur*. Cyprian doubtless has in mind one of his most frequently cited biblical passages, invoked especially in contexts of martyrdom, viz. Matt. 10.19 f., where his text read: *cum autem vos tradiderint, nolite cogitare quid loquamini. Dabitur enim vobis in illa hora quid loquamini. Non enim vos estis qui loquimini sed spiritus patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis*. He alludes to this passage no fewer than three other times in this brief letter (§1.3: *dicturi quod ad horam Dominus dici voluerit*; §1.4: *siquidem Deus in nobis positus illa hora loquatur*; §1.5: *instruente Domino . . . disponemus*), and see further Fahey 294 ff. for Cyprian's (literal) exploitation elsewhere of this text. In Cyprian's world not only may an *episcopus* be guided directly by instructions from the Lord (see e.g. *Epp.* 16 nn. 27 ff., n. 30, *Ep.* 48 n. 22, *Ep.* 66 n. 33), but an *episcopus martyr* would enjoy a special position of privileged access to the Holy Spirit (cf. *Ep.* 6 n. 14, *Ep.* 10 n. 19). As he writes this letter, he is clearly possessed of a heightened sense of his own inspirited state as a would-be martyr; he therefore desired that his longed-for martyrdom would occur at the very time when he was speaking of the things of God to his people (*ut dum de Deo loquitur in ipso sermonis opere necaretur*, Pont. Vit. Cyp. 14 H. CVI).

Cyprian was, of course, not alone in this attitude. For similar notions in contemporary *Acta* note e.g. *Act. Mont. et Luc.* 23.5 Musurillo 238 (Flavianus' dying commendation of the priest Lucianus, probably Cyprian's successor: *non enim difficile fuit spiritu iam caelo et Christo proximante habere notitiam*); *Act. Fruct.* 4.1 Musurillo 180 (Fructuosus' dying words are spoken *monente pariter ac loquente spiritu sancto*). The attitude is witnessed as early as Ignatius of Antioch, who can claim, as God's prisoner in bonds, to "understand heavenly things" and to speak "with God's own voice," *Ad Philad.* 7.1 f., combined with *Ad Trall.* 5.2. Compare *Didasc.* 5.1 (Connolly 161): "let him that is condemned for the name of the Lord God be esteemed of by you as a holy martyr, an angel of God, or God upon earth, even one that is spiritually clothed with the Holy Spirit of God." Indeed New Testament passages such as the favoured Matt. 10.19 f. only served to reinforce a long Jewish as well as Greco-Roman tradition of the prescience and inspired insight of the *moriturus*. On the Jewish tradition see Fischel, *Jew. Quart. Rev.* 37 (1947) 364 ff., and for a large collection of parallels in classical antiquity see Pease on Cic. *De div.*

1.63 (on *adpropinquante morte multo est diviniior* [sc. *animus*]), as well as Waszink on Tert. *De anima* 53.5 (on *quod adhuc cunctatur in corpore enuntiat quae videt, quae audit, quae incipit nosse*); Gnilka, JfAC 22 (1979) 5 ff. on *ultima verba* (7 f., 11 ff. on Cyprian).

6. *ore omnium loquitur*. For this sentiment—the bishop confesses for all—compare *Ep.* 60.1.2: in Cornelius' confession of faith *ecclesia omnis Romana confessa est*. For further discussion of this passage, Lods, *Confesseurs* 42 ff.

7. *mutilabitur honor ecclesiae nostrae tam gloriosae*. A surprising argument based at first sight on the apparent premise that a church will derive special honour from possessing in its locality the actual site where the martyr has spilt his saving blood. Cyprian is not unaware of the posthumous cultus and *gloria* that his martyrdom may be going to bring upon his own church. It is not only Rome that will boast of celebrated *tropaea*. In fact, of all the sanctuaries and *memoriae* dedicated in later times to Cyprian, the two major sites where he was honoured in Carthage were the *mensa*, on the very spot where he was beheaded (*in agro Sexti*), and the *basilica* where his body was entombed (*in areis Macrobianae, in via Mappaliensi*). Cf. Victor Vit. *Hist. persec.* 1.16 CSEL 7.8: *praecipue duas egregias et amplas sancti martyris Cipriani, unam ubi sanguinem fudit, aliam ubi eius sepultum est corpus, qui locus Mappalia vocatur*. For further details on these and other cult-sites of Cyprian's in Carthage, see Monceaux, *Rev. arch.* 39 (1901) 183 ff.; Audollent, *Carthage* 784 ff.; Saumagne, *Rev. arch.* 14 (1909) 188 ff.; DACL 2 (1925) s.v. "Carthage" 2261 ff. (H. Leclercq); Perler, *Les voyages* 420 ff.; Lapeyre and Pellegrin, *Carthage* 40 ff.; Vaultrin, *Les basiliques* 101 ff., esp. 141 ff.; Duval, *Loca sanctorum* 2.674 ff.

But the remark can be viewed as less self-regarding than it might thus appear. Cyprian is merely stating the obverse of his preceding remarks. If the bishop is identified with his Church, then the Church is to be identified with its bishop (cf. *Ep.* 66.8.3: *episcopum in ecclesia esse et ecclesiam in episcopo*). The *gloria* of uttering the inspired words of martyrdom will be lost to the people of Carthage if their bishop should go to his death elsewhere (cf. *Ep.* 13.1: *ecclesiae enim gloria praepositi gloria est*). And it remains the duty of a church leader to continue faithfully in the service of his people right to his death, confirming before their eyes his preaching by means of the ultimate *exemplum*. Cyprian is the pastoralist to the end.

Pontius understood well his master's thinking. Cyprian's death was a *spectaculum nobis pro devotione fidei gloriosum* (Pont. Vit. Cyp. 15 H. CVII). The people of Carthage, by their witnessing it, have become blessed and crowned as martyrs, suffering, and proclaiming their faith, along with their bishop (*o beatum ecclesiae populum qui episcopo suo . . . publicata voce compassus est et . . . Deo iudice coronatus est*, *ibid.* 18 H. CIX).

8. *expectamus . . . adventum proconsulis Cartaginem redeuntis*. The proconsul is Galerius Maximus: PIR² G. 28; Thomasson, *Die Statthalter* 2.124; Barbieri, *L'albo*, no. 1590. Note *redeuntis*. He will have arrived at Carthage earlier this year to take up his duties as proconsul and from there he will have set out on his assize tour. He is now returning via Utica (n. 3 above). Upon his death, which is to occur shortly, he was replaced by a procurator acting in his stead (*Act. Mont. et Luc.* 6.1 Musurillo 218: *procuratorem qui defuncti proconsulis partes administrabat*).

9. *auditori ab eo quid imperatores super christianorum laicorum et episcoporum nomine mandaverint*. It looks as if the proconsul has not yet formally promulgated throughout his province the imperial orders anticipated in *Ep.* 80.1.3.

10. *secundum quod me tractante saepissime didicistis, quietem et tranquillitatem tenete*. Cyprian had preached such a message in e.g. *Epp.* 11.7.3 (*humiles et quietos*), 13.4.3 (*humiles et quieti et taciturni*), 14.2.2 (*humiles et modestos et quietos esse debere*).

11. *nec quisquam vestrum aliquem tumultum fratribus moveat aut ul-tro se gentilibus offerat*. By the former clause Cyprian will be thinking of deliberately provocative behaviour (the ostentatious parade of Christianity or publicly defiant attitudes shown in the holding of illicit assemblies or the visiting of forbidden *areae*, etc.) which might bait the crowd or court the attention of the authorities against the Christian community generally. By the latter clause Cyprian is following a standard policy of the hierarchy in opposition to "voluntary martyrdom." See *Ep.* 19 n. 17 for discussion—and exceptions. Such opposition is seen already in *Mart. Polyc.* 4 Musurillo 4 (the cautionary story of the imprudent Quintus, with the conclusion "we do not approve of those who come forward of themselves, since this is not the teaching of the Gospel"), and note the comments by Eusebius on the incident in *H.E.* 4.15.7 f.; Clement of Alexandria firmly echoes

this attitude (e.g. *Strom.* 4.4.16.3 ff., 4.10.76 f., 7.11.66.3 ff. ed. Stählin GCS 2.256, 2.282, 3.47 f.) and Cyprian's successors were no less explicit (e.g. Mensurinus of Carthage *ap. Aug. Brevic. conlat.* 3.13.25 CCL 149A.290; Peter of Alexandria *Ep. can.* 9 MG 18.483 ff.; Lact. *De mort. persec.* 13.2 f. SC 39.1.92, and cf. Counc. Elvira can. 60: *si quis idola fregerit et ibidem fuerit occisus . . . placuit in numerum eum non recipi martyrum*, Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles* 1.1.255).

12. *qui nos confiteri magis voluit quam profiteri*. The *nos* here would appear to be generalizing (cf. n. 4 above). Cyprian is thinking not of himself only but as well of the bishops, priests, deacons, prominent layfolk (men and women), and *Caesariani* who, to his understanding (*Ep.* 80), are now being called upon to make their stand and be counted for their faith. They all form part of the Christian condition, where persecutions must needs come: *Ad Fort.* 11 CCL 3.201 ff. dilates at length upon that theme with many justifying texts.

13. *incolumes vos, fratres carissimi, Dominus Iesus in ecclesia sua permanere faciat*. The long years of apostasy, dissension, schism, and heresy have left their mark on Cyprian: his last, and characteristic, prayer is that his people should remain safe and sound within the bounds of the Church (where *salus* is to be found). On *incolumes* (referring more to spiritual than to physical safety?) compare *Ep.* 5 n. 3.

LETTER 82

Contents: Cyprian finds occasion to rejoice that Silvanus, Reginus, and Donatianus are all safe, that their faith is unshaken, and that they do remember him in their salutary prayers. But he finds cause for distress that they have failed to return his greetings and urges that they write to him for his spiritual advantage.

Date and Circumstances: The text of this letter is not in the edition of Hartel. It was published for the first time by Bévenot in *Bull. John Rylands* 28 (1944) 77 f. and that text is reproduced in ML Supp. 1 (1958) 41 ff. It occurs as the second letter (after our *Ep.* 58 and before our *Ep.* 10) in the 15th-century ms. of Cyprian now at Holkam Hall (Norfolk: Ho 121) with the *incipit*: *Cipriani Silvano Regino et Donatiano*

incipit. This ms. provides the (in part, corrupt) testimony for the text of the letter (a second version is to be found in the Oxford ms. Bodl., Lat. th. d. 4, f. 109^r also 15th century: I must thank Dr. G. F. Diercks for this information). But in the much earlier, 11th-century, Monte Cassino ms. of Cyprian (Monte Cassino 204) there occurs over its second letter (after *Ep.* 58) the *incipit*: *incipit epistula Cypriani ad Silvanum et Regianum martyres in metallo constitutos*. Then in fact follows the text of our *Ep.* 10, which is the third letter in the Holkam Hall ms. (cf. Ramsay, JTS 3 (1901–2) 592). The text of *Ep.* 82 clearly once occurred in an ancestor of Monte Cassino 204 but in the course of descent the text has slipped out and the *incipit* of *Ep.* 82 has become combined with the letter which followed, *Ep.* 10. And Bévenot has demonstrated with admirable lucidity that these two mss. are indeed closely related not only to each other but also to other Cyprian mss. of still greater antiquity and that they provide valuable clues for the reconstruction of the form of the original collections of Cyprian's works of which they are descendants. We are left in no doubt that this letter—however tenuous its thread of survival—was at a very early stage caught up in the Cyprianic corpus. See Bévenot, *Tradition of Manuscripts* 30 ff.

Given its uncontroversial contents—there is no doctrinal matter—this letter can hardly be the subject of serious forgery: that would be a pointless exercise. Some linguistic traits do, however, occasion some hesitation as to whether it may have been mistakenly ascribed to Cyprian's own pen. The use of *dominus*, *sanctissimus* (n. 1), *incolumitates* (n. 2), *pusilitas mea* (n. 4), *benedictus* (n. 5), and *mei meminisse* (n. 8) are all unusual, and in most cases unparalleled, in our extant Cyprianic letters. But the same point could equally well be made of features in many another (genuine) epistle: see e.g. Watson 299–314 for lengthy lists of words rare in form or unusual in meaning to be found in Cyprian's works and frequently occurring but once in the corpus. It is merely, therefore, the concentration within this brief note of several features that are unusual for Cyprian that occasions some surprise and that in most instances could be accounted for by the nature of the communication (otherwise unrepresented in the surviving correspondence). It is essentially a private note between friends, not written by one exercising the role of *episcopus* of the Carthaginian community (cf. n. 8 below, on *mei meminisse*); and Cyprian

wishes to coax these friends with a mixture of formal deference (*incolumitates, pusilatas mea*: see nn. 2 and 4) and spiritual flattery (*dominus, sanctissimus, benedictus*: see nn. 1 and 5). He has chosen his words accordingly. That—and its place in a respectable manuscript pedigree—should allay most grounds for hesitation on the question of authenticity. Dekkers-Gaar, *Clavis patrum latinorum*² 10 no. 51 report “Genuinitatem negat B. Fischer” but without bibliographical reference. But the possibility that *Ep.* 82 may owe its origins to a rhetorical exercise, conceived to be in the manner of Cyprian, has to remain open.

The contents of the letter disclose men who have courageously faced some trial of strength of their faith; but they have no immediate prospects of martyrdom (cf. n. 2 below). Little credence should be given, therefore, to the *incipit* of Monte Cassino 204, which describes the men as *martyres in metallo constitutos*. How Cyprian might in fact react under those circumstances is revealed by the effulgent rhetoric of *Ep.* 76. Indeed the references to confession and glory in this epistle are uncharacteristically subdued and oblique. One imagines that we might be dealing with Christians who had been summarily dismissed by a magistrate in the early days of the persecution of Decius (on these “released confessors” see *Letters of Cyprian*, 1 (ACW 43) intro. n. 209). But there is really very little to pin the letter down to a precise context.

The form of the letter is a standard one; it is cast as a gentle rebuke for failure to write along with a request for amends. There survive a host of samples of this type of exchange: see Koskeniemi, *Studien* 67 ff., and Thraede, *Grundzüge* 74 ff., 165 ff., for discussion, with further examples, and cf. [*Ep.*] 21.1.1 ff. for a (crude) instance in the Cyprianic correspondence. Elegancies of diction and subtle variations upon themes associated with the *topos* were choice forms of epistolary courtesy within the etiquette of the genre (that might contribute to uncommon features of style, as perhaps here). By the late fourth century (under the pen, say, of a Symmachus or a Synesius) they had developed into elaborately stylized forms of greeting card, adorned with convoluted arabesques of formulaic phraseology.

1. *Cyprianus dominis meis fratribus (sanctissimis) atque dilectissimis incomparabili caritate et mutua dilectione connexis, Silvano Regino Dona-*

tiano in domino salutem. There are several turns of phrase in this salutation that are without parallel in other epistolary inscriptions in our extant Cyprian. But *Ep.* 76 *init.* shows that Cyprian could be happily inventive if the occasion warranted it: addressing illustrious confessors (as here and in *Ep.* 76) was one such occasion.

The use of *dominus* both as a general term of address and in the more specialized Christian usage in greeting confessors and martyrs is without parallel in Cyprian's own letters, but see *Epp.* 79 n. 8, 77 n. 14, 21 n. 2 for the usage in Cyprian's correspondents. The epithet *sanctissimus*, here found as a marginal addition but occurring later in the body of the letter (*sanctissimas sorores nostras*), is rare in Cyprian but note *Ep.* 59.19.1 (*sanctissimae . . . plebi*) and see *Ep.* 36 n. 11 (Novatian) and *Ep.* 49 n. 16 (Cornelius) for the epithet used by Cyprian's correspondents. The three names do not occur elsewhere in the correspondence; they appear to be laymen. For a more detailed analysis of this *salutatio*, Bastiaensen 30 ff.

2. *inter maximam leticiam votorum meorum de vestris incolumitatibus perceptam*. The first half-dozen lines of this letter are lacunose. I have done my best to convey the elements of the Latin without great confidence that I have captured the precise sequence of thought intended.

The men addressed are confessors. They have once undergone some trial of faith (which remains unshaken); their prayers are, accordingly, especially efficacious (see next n.). But the fulfilment of martyrdom is clearly not now in immediate prospect (no word of martyr's crowns but, instead, of the ultimate rewards for virginity, on which see n. 7 below). By *incolumitates*, therefore, Cyprian would appear to be alluding both to their physical and to their spiritual safety with which they have emerged from their ordeal: they seem to "have escaped death without any weakening on their part" (Bévenot, *Bull. J. Ryl.* 28 [1944] 78). For Cyprian's usage of *incolumis*, *incolumitas* in similar contexts see *Ep.* 5 n. 3, *Ep.* 81 n. 13, and cf. *Ep.* 79 n. 3. The abstractness of the expression here in the plural (*vestrae incolumitates*) might appear a little unusual for Cyprian (cf. n. 4 below) but it is a medium for conveying that deferential stance appropriate for the message of the letter; on Cyprian's penchant for such abstract turns of phrase in general, see Watson 207 ff., 273. On Cyprian's use

of *votum* (but normally in the singular in the sense of *gaudium*) consult Watson 269 f.

3. *sanctis atque immaculatis vestris precibus . . . veniam delictorum mihi a domino esse tributam*. The special efficacy attached to the intercessory prayers of confessors finds frequent expression in the Cyprianic correspondence: see e.g. *Epp.* 6. n. 14, 15 n. 1, 21 n. 16, 60 n. 15, 76 n. 23. One might expect, however, Cyprian not to stress so pointedly and specifically the power of their prayers to gain forgiveness for sins *after* his experience of the unruly confessors in the wake of the Decian persecution: contrast e.g. *Ep.* 76.7.3. A hint that the letter could perhaps have a Decian setting?

4. *quod litteris vestris aspernimini (sic) pusilitatem meam resalutare*. (The Oxford ms. reads here, correctly, *aspernamini*). *Pusil(l)itas mea* has only rare and late parallels (see Bévenot, *Bull. J. Ryl.* 28 [1944] 79), but Cyprian can use elsewhere *mea mediocritas* (*Ep.* 20.1.2), *verecundia nostra* (*Ep.* 27.3.2), *parva nostra mediocritas* (*Ep.* 69.17), *humilitas nostra* (*De hab. virg.* 3 H. 189), and see Watson 208, 273 for further Cyprianic examples. It is not inherently improbable, therefore, that Cyprian might employ such an abstract expression, especially in a context in which he wishes to rebuke with studious deference: he is deploying a flourish of epistolary politesse. Indeed, on the formality of this occasion (reproach for failure to write) see intro. to this letter. It is clear that Cyprian has already exchanged correspondence with the addressees in the past: they are now being admonished to write again.

5. *salutate sanctissimas sorores nostras (benedictas) Metucosam et Valeriam*. On the use of *sanctissimus* see n. 1 above; Cyprian himself nowhere else happens to employ *benedictus* (here found in the margin) but it occurs in his correspondents, *Ep.* 8.1.1 (*benedictum Papatem Cyprianum*) and *Ep.* 22.2.1 (*benedictus martyr Paulus*); for further discussion see *Ep.* 8 n. 3. Bévenot, *Bull. J. Ryl.* 28 (1944) 80, speculates whether the strange name *Metucosa* (for which I can find no parallel) might possibly be connected with the Etecusa (Metecusa?) of *Ep.* 21.3.2. For discussion see *Ep.* 21 n. 25.

6. *quas vobiscum in cursu et stadio sanctitatis deus custodiat*. For parallel phrasing note *Ep.* 38.1.2 (*quando vicit in cursu*) and cf. [Cyp.] *Ep.* 78.1.2 (*qui prior est in cursu*).

7. *cum coeperit in vobis virginitas honorari*. This finds an unmistakable verbal echo in *De hab. virg.* 24 H. 205 (*cum incipiet in vobis virginitas honorari*) and may be imitated in turn in *De laud. mart.* 30 H. 3.51 (*cum in vobis Dominus martyrium coeperit honorare*) and in *Serm. de centesima* ML Supp. 1.67: *mementote tunc nostri cum incipient in vos caelestia praemia declarari*; in all three contexts there is reference also to the remembrance of their fellow Christians. Echoes between treatises and epistles are not uncommon: see e.g. *Ep.* 10 n. 34; Réveillaud, *L'oraison* 39 ff., 159, 202 on *Ep.* 11 and *De dom. orat*; *Ep.* 58 nn. 5 and 6; *Epp.* 69–74 passim and *De unit.* Cyprian ends by paying flattering tribute to their *gloria gemina*—not only confessional honours (yielding a prize in heaven of one hundredfold) but triumphant chastity as well (bringing a sixtyfold reward). See *Ep.* 76.6.2 for this notion (with n. 19 ad loc. for parallels to the special status accorded the virgin confessor or martyr, in which category Cyprian with adroit flattery places his correspondents).

8. *opto vos bene valere et mei meminisse*. The *mei* is unexpected in a Cyprianic letter: his epistolary habit is to use *nostri meminisse*. However, this is essentially a private note (we have no other such sample from Cyprian's pen): he uses throughout, and with great consistency, the first person singular, the only two exceptions being *sorores nostras* and *ut vestris precibus possimus condonari*, where the reference in both is not personal but to the general Christian community. So *mei*, while unparalleled, is nevertheless consonant with the private character of this note. For some remarks on Cyprian's (somewhat variable) employment of the first person singular and plural, *Epp.* 4 n. 45, 16 n. 34, 20 n. 3, 66 n. 33, 73 n. 2, 81 n. 4.

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